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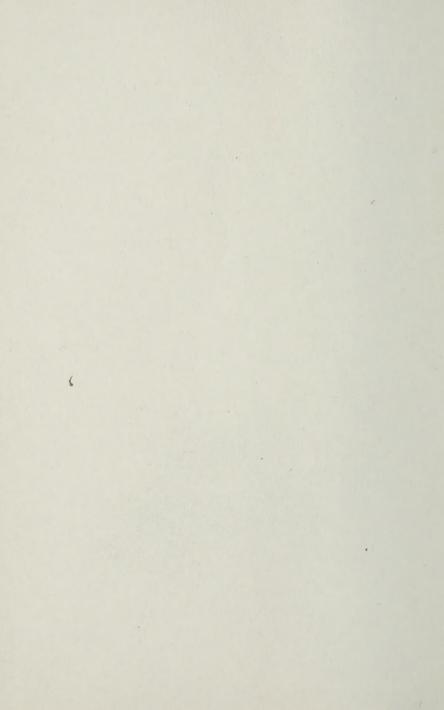
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Cap! EDWARD Low.

## Ashton's Memorial:

An History of

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES

AND

SIGNAL DELIVERANCES

OF

PHILIP ASHTON, JR.

OF

MARBLEHEAD

Edited by Russell W. Knight



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### Introduction

its rousing tales of adventure, misfortune, and hard-ship, few either equal or surpass the trials and tribulations of Philip Ashton, Jr., of Marblehead, Massachusetts.\*

From the day he was taken prisoner by the notorious pirate Captain Edward (Ned) Low—who sometimes sliced off his captives' ears and forced his unfortunate victims to eat them—until he was rescued two years, ten months, and fifteen days later, the specter of death never once left his side. Each dawn was the forerunner of another twenty-four anxiety-laden hours; each night an interval of fitful sleep plagued by horrible dreams and visions of a cruel, untimely end.

At length, however, Ashton was returned to the world he had known before his capture and there found a ready chronicler in the person of the Reverend John Barnard. Barnard, who had succeeded to the ministry of the First Congregational (Old North) Church in Marblehead, Massachusetts, in 1724, seized upon the signal deliverances of Philip Ashton as a subject befitting a sermon soon after the young man's miraculous return to his family and friends. Shortly thereafter, Parson Barnard recorded Ashton's stirring account and arranged for its publication. It was ready for the press by early August 1725, just three months after Ashton's sudden reappearance.

Ashton's Memorial was first published by Samuel Gerrish, Cornhill, Boston, at the beginning of the following October as a sixty-six page book or pamphlet. Since then it has enjoyed

<sup>\*</sup> Philip Ashton, Jr., was the son of Philip and Sarah (Henley) Ashton. Born in Marblehead August 12, 1702 he was baptized at the First Congregational Church April 18, 1703.

a healthy reprinting history which began with the smaller-format 148-page edition published in 1726 for Richard Ford and Samuel Chandler in the Poultry, London, England. Other full or abridged versions, either standing alone or used in conjunction with other narratives of disaster and daring, followed at intervals. These have included printings at Portland, Maine (1810), Edinburgh, Scotland (1812), Boston, Massachusetts (1850), London, England (1851), Marblehead (1910), and Salem, Massachusetts (1923).

Of the original 1725 Boston edition, only a half a dozen copies are known to exist. Even fewer examples of the London edition of 1726 seem to have survived the centuries, while the later versions have become rarities in themselves. The present reprinting, unlike those of the past, has been carefully designed to emulate the flavor and style of the first Boston edition without

simply becoming a mechanical facsimile of it.

To this day, Ashton's Memorial remains one of the liveliest tales ever published in colonial America. It is truly one of the great real-life adventures of all time, a book one never forgets.

RUSSELL W. KNIGHT

Marblehead, Massachusetts

# Albton's Memorial.

AN

# HISTORY

OF THE

Strange Adventures,

AND

Signal Deliverances,

OF

# Mr. Philip Ashton,

Who, after he had made his Escape from the PIRATES, liv'd alone on a Desolate Island for about Sixteen Months, &c.

#### WITH

A fhort Account of Mr. Nicholas Merritt, who was taken at the same time.

To which is added

A SERMON on Dan. 3. 17.

#### By JOHN BARNARD, V. D. M.

We should not trust in our felves, but in God;

mho delivered us from so great a Death, and doth
deliver; in whom we trust, that he will yet deliver us.
II. Cot. I. 9, 10.

BOSTON, N.E. Printed for Samuel Gerrift, at his Shop in Corn-Hill, 1725.

## ASHTON'S Memorial:

Or, An Authentick

# ACCOUNT

O F

The Strange Adventures and Signal Deliverances

Mr. Philip Ashton;

WHO,

After he had made his Escape from the Pirates, liv'd alone on a desolate Island for about 16 Months, &c.

With a short Account of

Mr. NICHOLAS MERRITT, who was taken at the fame time.

To which is added,

A SERMON on Dan. iii. 17

By John Barnard, V. D. M.

- We should not trust in our selves, hut in God, - who delivered us from so great a Death, and dothed liver; in whom we trust, that he will yet deliver us. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

#### LONDON:

Printed for RICHARD FORD and SAMUEL CHANDLER, both in the Foultry. 1726.



# TO THE READER.

HERE are Two things evidently Designed in making this Publick to the World. One is, that GOD may have the Glory, by a grateful Remembrance, & thankful Acknowledgement of His Power and Goodness, in His Wonderful works to the Children of

Men. For such Remarkable Instances are a clear Testimony to the Superintendecy of some Supream Power, and Alwise Agent, over the Kingdom of Providence, who has the Sole Government of all Secundary Causes, and gives unexpected and surprising turns and changes, both to the Hearts, and affairs of Mankind; and who is therefore ever to be acknowledged by us in all our wayes, and Worshipped with a Religious Fear and Reverence.

The other is, That all Men may be led to a steady Hope and Trust in that GOD, whose Eyes run to and fro in the Earth, beholding the Evil and the Good, that he may shew himself strong on the behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards him: that their Minds being fortified with the firm Belief of the Governing Providence of GOD, and his Ability to do more than they can ask or think, may secure them against running into those Irregular methods to obtain relief under the melancholy prospect of approaching Want, to free themselves from any present Burdens, or to escape any threatening Danger, into

which their prevailing, but misguided Fears may be apt to hurry them.

More particularly, that those whose Business lyes upon the Great Waters, and especially our Fishing Tribe (if ever it should be the unhappy Portion of any of them to fall into the Hands of the Sons of Violence, which GOD prevent) may learn from hence, That it is safer trusting GOD than Man with the disposal of their Lives; and that therefore it will be their wisest course to take up sober Resolutions utterly to refuse all Sinful Compliances with them in their pernicious practices, les their Threatenings of immediate Death be ever so fiercely repeated, seeing the Infinitely Wise GOD has unknown methods to Preserve and Deliver them; rather than by willingly officiating themselves with them in their Evil Manners, to forfeit the Protection of Heaven, and unavoidably rush into that Misery and Death, which they vainly think to Escape.

The great Reason why this Narrative, which has been so long wished for, has no sooner appeared, is because Mr. Ashton has necessarily been so much absent, that I have not been able to get the opportunity of Conferring with him, more than two or three times, about the Remarkable Occurrences he has met with; and having no leisure himself to write, I have taken the Minutes of all from his own Mouth, and after I had put them together, I have improved the first vacant Hour I could, to Read it over distinctly to him, that he might Correct the Errors, that might arise from my misunderstanding his Report. Thus Corrected, he has set his Hand to it as his own History.

I have added to it a short Account of Mr. Nicholas Merritt, (who was taken the same time with Mr. Ashton) the manner of his Escape from the Pirates, and the hard usage he met with upon it, till his return to his own Country; which I had

from his own Mouth; all Tending to the same end and purpose.

And if the great Ends hereof, the Glory of GOD, and the good of Mankind may be in any measure promoted hereby, (which GOD grant) I shall not think much of the time and pains I have taken in Writing it.

J. Barnard.

Marblehead, Aug. 3.





## Ashton's Memorial

An History of the Strange Adventures, and Signal Deliverances of

Mr. Philip Ashton, Jun.

of Marblehead



PON Friday, June 15th, 1722, After I had been out for some time in the Schooner Milton, upon the Fishing grounds, off Cape Sable Shoar, among others, I came to Sail in Company with Nicholas Merritt, in a Shallop, and stood in for Port-Rossaway, designing to Har-

bour there, till the Sabbath was over; where we Arrived about Four of the Clock in the Afternoon. When we came into the Harbour, where several of our Fishing Vessels had arrived before us, we spy'd among them a Brigantine, which we supposed to have been an Inward bound Vessel, from the West Indies, and had no apprehensions of any Danger from her; but by the time we had been at Anchor two or three Hours, a Boat from the Brigantine, with Four hands, came along side of us, and the Men Jumpt in upon our Deck, without our suspecting any thing but that they were Friends, come on board to visit, or inquire what News; till they drew their Cutlashes and Pistols from under their Clothes, and Cock'd the one and Brandish'd the other, and began to Curse & Swear at us, and demanded a Surrender of our Selves and Vessel to them. It was too late for us to rectify our

Ι

Mistake, and think of Freeing our Selves from their power: for however we might have been able, (being Five of us and a Boy)<sup>3</sup> to have kept them at a Distance, had we known who they were, before they had boarded us; yet now we had our Arms to seek, and being in no Capacity to make any Resistance, were necessitated to submit our selves to their will and pleasure. In this manner they surprised *Nicholas Merritt*, and 12 or 13 other Fishing Vessels this Evening.

When the Boat went off from our Vessel, they carried me on board the Brigantine,<sup>5</sup> and who should it prove but the Infamous *Ned Low*, the Pirate, with about 42 Hands, 2 Great Guns, and 4 Swivel Guns. You may easily imagine how I look'd, and felt, when too late to prevent it, I found myself fallen into the hands of such a mad, roaring, mischievous Crew; yet I hoped, that they would not force me away with them, and I purposed to endure any hardship among them patiently, rather than turn Pirate with them.

Low presently sent for me Aft, and according to the Pirates usual Custom, and in their proper Dialect, asked me, If I would sign their Articles, and go along with them. I told him, No; I could by no means consent to go with them, I should be glad if he would give me my Liberty, and put me on board any Vessel, or set me on shoar there. For indeed my dislike of their Company and Actions, my concern for my Parents, and my fears of being found in such bad Company, made me dread the thoughts of being carried away by them; so that I had not the least Inclination to continue with them.

Upon my utter Refusal to joyn and go with them, I was thrust down into the Hold, which I found to be a safe retreat for me several times afterwards. By that time I had been in the Hold a few Hours, they had compleated the taking the several Vessels that were in the Harbour, and the Examining of the Men; and the next Day I was fetched up with some others that were there, and about 30 or 40 of us were put on board a Schooner belonging

to Mr. Orn[e] of Marblehead, which the Pirates made use of for a sort of a Prison, upon the present occasion; where we were all confined unarm'd, with an armed Guard over us, till the Sultan's pleasure should be further known.

The next Lord's Day about Noon, one of the Quarter Masters, John Russel by Name, came on board the Schooner and took six of us, (Nicholas Merritt, Joseph Libbie, Lawrence Fabens, and my self, all of Marblehead, the Eldest of us, if I mistake not, under 21 Years of Age, with two others) and carried us on board the Brigantine; where we were called upon the Quarter Deck, and Low came up to us with Pistol in hand, and with a full mouth demanded, Are any of you, Married Men? This short and unexpected Question, and the sight of the Pistol, struck us all dumb, and not a Man of us dared to speak a word, for fear there should have been a design in it, which we were not able to see thro'. Our Silence kindled our new Master into a Flame, who could not bear it, that so many Beardless Boyes should deny him an Answer to so plain a Question; and therefore in a Rage, he Cock'd his Pistol, and clapt it to my Head, and cryed out, You D-g! why don't you Answer me? and Swore vehemently, he would shoot me thro' the Head, if I did not tell him immediately, whether I was Married or no.

I was sufficiently frightened at the fierceness of the Man, and the boldness of his threatening, but rather than lose my Life for so trifling a matter, I e'en ventured at length to tell him, I was not Married, as loud as I dar'd to speak it; and so said the rest of my Companions. Upon this he seemed something pacified, and turned away from us.

It seems his design was to take no Married Man away with him, how young soever he might be, which I often wondred at; till after I had been with him some considerable time, and could observe in him an uneasiness in the sentiments of his Mind, and the workings of his passions towards a young Child he had at Bostom (his Wife being Dead, as I learned, some small time before he

turned Pirate) which upon every lucid interval from Revelling and Drink he would express a great tenderness for, insomuch that I have seen him sit down and weep plentifully upon the mentioning of it; and then I concluded, that probably the Reason of his taking none but Single Men was, that he might have none with him under the Influence of such powerful attractives, as a Wife & Children, lest they should grow uneasy in his Service, and have an Inclination to Desert him, and return home for the sake of their Families.

Low presently came up to us again, and asked the Old Question, Whether we would Sign their Articles, and go along with them? We all told him No; we could not; so we were dismissed. But within a little while we were call'd to him Singly, and then it was demanded of me, with Sternness and Threats, whether I would Joyn with them? I still persisted in the Denial; which thro' the assistance of Heaven, I was resolved to do, tho' he shot me. And as I understood, all my Six Companions, who were called in their turns, still refused to go with him.

Then I was led down into the Steerage, by one of the Quarter-Masters, and there I was assaulted with Temptations of another kind, in hopes to win me over to become one of them; a number of them got about me, and instead of Hissing, shook their Rattles, and treated me with abundance of Respect and Kindness, in their way; they did all they could to sooth my Sorrows, and set before me the strong Allurement of the Vast Riches they should gain, and what Mighty Men they designed to be, and would fain have me to joyn with them, and share in their Spoils; and to make all go down the more Glib, they greatly Importuned me to Drink with them, not doubting but this wile would sufficiently entangle me, and so they should prevail with me to do that in my Cups, which they perceived they could not bring me to while I was Sober: but all their fair and plausible Carriage, their proffered Kindness, and airy notions of Riches, had not the Effect upon me which they desired; and I had no Inclination to drown my Sorrows with my Senses in their Inebriating Bowls, and so refused their Drink, as well as their Proposals.

After this I was brought upon Deck again, and Low came up to me, with His Pistol Cock'd, and clap'd it to my Head, and said to me, You D-g you! if you will not Sign our Articles, and go along with me, I'll shoot you thro' the Head; and uttered his Threats with his utmost Fierceness, and with the usual Flashes of Swearing and Cursing. I told him, That I was in his hands, and he might do with me what he pleased, but I could not be willing to go with him: and then I earnestly beg'd of him with many Tears, and used all the Arguments I could think of to perswade him, not to carry me away; but he was deaf to my Cryes, and unmoved by all I could say to him; and told me, I was an Impudent D-g, and Swore, I should go with him whether I would or no. So I found all my Cryes, and Entreaties were in vain, and there was no help for it, go with them I must, and as I understood, they set mine and my Townsmens Names down in their Book, tho' against our Consent. And I desire to mention it with due Acknowledgments to GOD, who withheld me, that neither their promises, nor their threatenings, nor blows could move me to a willingness to Joyn with them in their pernicious ways.

Upon Tuesday, June 19th. they changed their Vessel, and took for their Privateer, as they call'd it, a Schooner belonging to Mr. Joseph Dolliber<sup>s</sup> of Marblehead, being new, clean, and a good Sailer, and shipped all their hands on board her, and put the Prisoners, such as they designed to send home, on board the Brigantine [Rebecca], with one [Captain James Flucker] who was her Master, and ordered them for Boston.

When I saw the Captives were likely to be sent Home, I thought I would make one attempt more to obtain my Freedom, and accordingly *Nicholas Merrit*, my Townsman and Kinsman, went along with me to *Low*, and we fell upon our Knees, and with utmost Importunity besought him to let us go Home in the Brigantine, among the rest of the Captives: but he immediately

called for his Pistols, and told us we should not go, and Swore bitterly, if either of us offered to stir, he would shoot us down.

Thus all attempts to be delivered out of the hands of unreasonable Men (if they may be called Men) were hitherto unsuccessful; and I had the melancholy prospect of seeing the Brigantine sail away with the most of us that were taken at Port-Rossaway, but my self, and three Townsmen mentioned, and four Isle of Shoal-men detained on board the Schooner, in the worst of Captivity, without any present likelyhood of Escaping.

And yet before the Brigantine sailed, an opportunity presented, that gave me some hopes that I might get away from them; for some of Low's people, who had been on shoar at Port-Rossaway to get water, had left a Dog belonging to him behind them; and Low observing the Dog a shoar howling to come off, order'd some hands to take the Boat and fetch him. Two Young Men, John Holman, and Benjamin Ashton, both of Marblehead, readily Jumpt into the Boat, and I (who pretty well knew their Inclination to be rid of such Company, & was exceedingly desirous my self to be freed from my present Station, and thought if I could but once set foot on shoar, they should have good luck to get me on board again) was getting over the side into the Boat; but Quarter Master Russel spy'd me, and caught hold on my Shoulder, and drew me in board, and with a Curse told me, Two was eno', I should not go. The two Young Men had more sense and virtue than to come off to them again, so that after some time of waiting, they found they were deprived of their Men, their Boat, and their Dog; and they could not go after them.

When they saw what a trick was play'd them, the Quarter Master came up to me Cursing and Swearing, that I knew of their design to Run away, and intended to have been one of them; but tho' it would have been an unspeakable pleasure to me to have been with them, yet I was forced to tell him, I knew not of their design; and indeed I did not, tho' I had good reason to suspect what would be the event of their going. This did not pacifie

the Quarter-Master, who with outragious Cursing and Swearing clapt his Pistol to my Head, and snap'd it; but it miss'd Fire: this enraged him the more; and he repeated the snapping of his Pistol at my Head three times, and it as often miss'd Fire; upon which he held it over-board, and snap'd it the fourth time, and then it went off very readily. (Thus did GOD mercifully quench the violence of the Fire, that was meant to destroy me!) The Quarter-Master upon this, in the utmost fury, drew his Cutlass, and fell upon me with it, but I leap'd down into the Hold, and got among a Crowd that was there, and so escaped the further effects of his madness and rage. Thus, tho' GOD suffered me not to gain my wished-for Freedom, yet he wonderfully preserved me from Death.

All hopes of obtaining Deliverance were now past and gone; the Brigantine and Fishing Vessels were upon their way homeward, the Boat was ashore, and not likely to come off again; I could see no possible way of Escape; and who can express the concern and Agony I was in, to see my self, a Young Lad not 20 Years Old, carried forcibly from my Parents, whom I had so much reason to value for the tenderness I knew they had for me, & to whom my being among Pyrates, would be as a Sword in their Bowels, and the Anguishes of Death to them; confined to such Company as I could not but have an exceeding great abhorrence of; in Danger of being poisoned in my morals, by Living among them, and of falling a Sacrifice to Justice, if ever I should be taken with them. I had no way left for my Comfort, but earnestly to commit my self and my cause to GOD, and wait upon Him for Deliverance in his own time and way; and in the mean while firmly to resolve, thro' Divine Assistance, that nothing should ever bring me to a willingness to Joyn with them, or share in their Spoils.

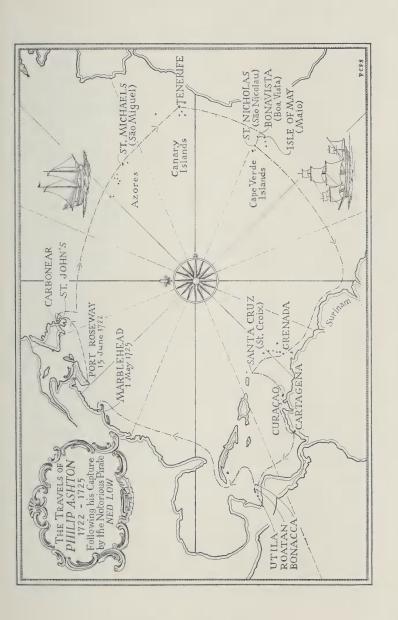
I soon found that any Death was preferable to being link'd with such a vile Crew of Miscreants, to whom it was a sport to do Mischief; where prodigious Drinking, monstrous Cursing and

Swearing, hideous Blasphemies, and open defiance of Heaven, and contempt of Hell it self, was the constant Employment, unless when Sleep something abated the Noise and Revellings.

Thus Confined, the best course I could take, was to keep out of the way, down in the Hold, or wherever I could be most free from their perpetual Din; and fixed purpose with my self, that the first time I had an opportunity to set my Foot on shore, let it be in what part of the World it would, it should prove (if possible) my taking a final leave of *Low* and Company.

I would remark it now also (that I might not interrupt the Story with it afterwards) that while I was on board Low, they used once a Week, or Fortnight, as the Evil Spirit moved them, to bring me under Examination, and anew demand my Signing their Articles, and Joyning with them; but Blessed be GOD, I was enabled to persist in a constant refusal to become one of them, tho' I was thrashed with Sword or Cane, as often as I denyed them; the fury of which I had no way to avoid, but by Jumping down into the Hold, where for a while I was safe. I look'd upon my self, for a long while, but as a Dead Man among them, and expected every Day of Examination would prove the last of my Life, till I learned from some of them, that it was one of their Articles, Not to Draw Blood, or take away the Life of any Man, after they had given him Quarter, unless he was to be punished as a Criminal; and this emboldned me afterwards, so that I was not so much affraid to deny them, seeing my Life was given me for a Prev.

This Tuesday, towards Evening, Low and Company came to sail in the Schooner, formerly called the Mary, now the Fancy, and made off for Newfoundland; and here they met with such an Adventure, as had like to have proved fatal to them. They fell in with the Mouth of St. John's Harbour in a Fogg, before they knew where they were; when the Fogg clearing up a little, they spy'd a large Ship riding at Anchor in the Harbour, but could not discern what she was, by reason of the thickness of the Air, and



concluded she was a Fish-Trader; this they look'd upon as a Boon Prize for them, and thought they should be wonderfully well accommodated with a good Ship under Foot, and if she proved but a good Sailer, would greatly further their Roving Designs, and render them a Match for almost any thing they could meet with, so that they need not fear being taken.

Accordingly they came to a Resolution to go in and take her; and imagining it was best doing it by Stratagem, they concluded to put all their Hands, but Six or Seven, down in the Hold, and make a shew as if they were a Fishing Vessel, and so run up along side of her, and surprise her, and bring her off; and great was their Joy at the distant prospect how cleverly they should catch her. They began to put their designs in Execution, stowed away their Hands, leaving but a few upon Deck, and made Sail in order to seise the Prey; when there comes along a small Fisher-Boat, from out the Harbour; and hailed them, and asked them, from whence they were? They told them, from Barbadoes, and were laden with Rhum and Sugar; then they asked the Fisherman, What large Ship that was in the Harbour? who told them it was a large Man of War.

The very Name of a Man of War struck them all up in a Heap, spoiled their Mirth, their fair Hopes, and promising Design of having a good Ship at Command; and lest they should catch a Tartar, they thought it their wisest and safest way, instead of going into the Harbour, to be gone as fast as they could; and accordingly they stretched away farther Eastward, and put into a small Harbour, called *Carboneur*, about 15 Leagues distance; where they went on Shoar; took the Place, and destroyed the Houses, but hurt none of the People; as they told me, for I was not suffered to go a shore with them.

The next Day they made off for the Grand Bank, where they took seven or eight Vessels, and among them a French Banker, a Ship of about 350 Tuns, and 2 Guns; this they carried off with them, and stood away for St. Michaels.<sup>10</sup>

Off of St. Michaels they took a large Portugueze Pink, laden with Wheat, coming out of the Road, which I was told was formerly call'd the Rose-Frigat. She struck to the Schooner, fearing the large Ship that was coming down to them; tho' all Low's Force had been no Match for her, if the Portugueze had made a good Resistance. This Pink they soon observed to be a much better Sailer than their French Banker, which went heavily; and therefore they threw the greatest part of the Wheat over board, reserving only eno' to Ballast the Vessel for the present, and took what they wanted out of the Banker, and then Burnt her, and sent the most of the Portugueze away in a large Lanch they had taken.

Now they made the Pink, which Mounted 14 Guns, their Commodore, and with this and the Schooner Sailed from St. Michaels, to the Canaries, where off of Teneriff, they gave Chase to a Sloop, which got under the Command of the Fortress, and so escaped falling into their Hands; but stretching along to the Western end of the Island, they came up with a Fishing Boat, and being in want of Water, made them Pilot them into a small Harbour, where they went a shore and got a supply.

After they had Watered, they Sailed away for Cape de Verde Islands, and upon making the Isle of May, they descry'd a Sloop, which they took, and it proved to be a Bristol-man, one Pare or Pier Master; this Sloop they designed for a Tender, and put on board her my Kinsman Nicholas Merritt, with 8 or 9 hands more, and Sailed away for Bonavista, 11 with a design to careen their Vessels.

In their Passage to *Bonavista*, the Sloop wronged both the Pink and the Schooner; which the Hands on board observing, being mostly Forced Men, or such as were weary of their Employment, upon the *Fifth of September*, Ran away with her and made their Escape.

When they came to *Bonavista*, they have down the Schooner, and careen'd her, and then the Pink; and here they gave the

Wheat, which they had kept to Ballast the Pink with, to the *Portugueze*, and took other Ballast.

After they had cleaned and fitted their Vessels, they steered away for St. Nicholas, 12 to get better Water: and here as I was told, 7 or 8 hands out of the Pink went a shore a Fowling, but never came off more, among which I suppose Lawrence Fabins was one, and what became of them I never could hear to this Day. Then they put out to Sea, and stood away for the Coast of Brasil hoping to meet with Richer Prizes than they had yet taken; in the Passage thither, they made a Ship, which they gave chase to, but could not come up with; and when they came upon the Coast, it had like to have proved a sad Coast to them: for the Trade-Winds blowing exceeding hard at South East, they fell in upon the Northern part of the Coast, near 200 Leagues to the Leeward of where they designed; and here we were all in exceeding great Danger, and for Five Days and Nights together, hourly feared when we should be swallowed up by the violence of the Wind and Sea, or stranded upon some of the Shoals, that lay many Leagues off from Land. In this time of Extremity, the Poor Wretches had no where to go for Help! For they were at open Defiance with their Maker, & they could have but little comfort in the thoughts of their Agreement with Hell; such mighty Hectors as they were, in a clear Sky and a fair Gale, yet a fierce Wind and a boisterous Sea sunk their Spirits to a Cowardly dejection, and they evidently feared the Almighty, whom before they defied, lest He was come to Torment them before their expected Time; and tho' they were so habituated to Cursing and Swearing, that the Dismal Prospect of Death, & this of so long Continuance, could not Correct the language of most of them, yet you might plainly see the inward Horror and Anguish of their Minds, visible in their Countenances, and like Men amazed, or starting out of Sleep in a fright, I could hear them ever now and then, cry out, Oh! I wish I were at Home.

When the Fierceness of the Weather was over, and they had

recovered their Spirits, by the help of a little *Nantes*, they bore away to the *West Indies*, and made the three Islands call'd the *Triangles*, <sup>13</sup> lying off the Main about 40 Leagues to the Eastward, of *Surinam*. Here they went in and careened their Vessels again; and it had like to have proved a fatal Scouring to them.

For as they have down the Pink, Low had ordered so many hands upon the Shrouds, and Yards, to throw her Bottom out of Water, that it threw her Ports, which were open, under Water; and the Water flow'd in with such freedom that it presently overset her. Low and the Doctor were in the Cabin together, and as soon as he perceived the Water to gush in upon him, he bolted out at one of the Stern-Ports, which the Doctor also attempted, but the Sea rushed so violently into the Port by that time, as to force him back into the Cabin, upon which Low nimbly run his Arm into the Port, and caught hold of his Shoulder and drew him out, and so saved him. The Vessel pitched her Masts to the Ground, in about 6 Fathom Water, and turn'd her Keel out of Water; but as her Hull filled, it sunk, and by the help of her Yard-Arms, which I suppose bore upon the Ground, her Masts were raised something out of Water; the Men that were upon her Shrouds and Yards, got upon her Hull, when that was uppermost, and then upon her Top-Masts and Shrouds, when they were raised again. I (who with other light Lads were sent up to the Main-Top-Gallant Yard) was very difficultly put to it to save my Life, being but a poor Swimmer; for the Boat which picked the Men up, refused to take me in, & I was put upon making the best of my way to the Buoy, which with much ado I recovered, and it being large I stayed my self by it, till the Boat came along close by it, and then I called to them to take me in; but they being full of Men still refused me; and I did not know but they meant to leave me to perish there; but the Boat making way a head very slowly because of her deep load, and Joseph Libbie calling to me to put off from the Buoy and Swim to them, I e'en ventured it, and he took me by the hand and drew me in

board. They lost two Men by this Accident, viz. John Bell, and one they called Zana Gourdon. The Men that were on board the Schooner were busy a mending the Sails, under an Auning, so they knew nothing of what had happened to the Pink, till the Boat full of Men came along side of them, tho' they were but about Gun-Shot off, and We made a great out-cry: and therefore they sent not their Boat to help take up the Men.

And now Low and his Gang, having lost their Frigate, and with her the greatest part of their Provision and Water, were again reduced to their Schooner as their only Privateer, and in her they put to Sea, and were brought to a very great straits for want of Water; for they could not get a supply at the Triangles, and when they hoped to furnish themselves at Tobago, the Current set so strong, & the Season was so Calm, that they could not recover the Harbour, so they were forced to stand away for Grand Grenada, a French Island about 18 Leagues to the Westward of Tobago, which they gained, after they had been at the hardship of half a pint of Water a Man for Sixteen Dayes together.

Here the French came on board, and Low having put all his Men down, but a sufficient number to Sail the Vessel, told them upon their Enquiry, Whence he was, that he was come from Barbadoes, and had lost his Water; and was oblig'd to put in for a recruit; the poor People not suspecting him for a Pyrate, readily suffered him to send his Men ashoar and fetch off a supply. But the Frenchmen afterwards suspecting he was a Smugling Trader, thought to have made a Boon Prize of him, and the next day fitted out a large Rhode-Island built Sloop of 70 Tuns, with 4 Guns mounted, and about 30 Hands, with design to have taken him. Low was apprehensive of no danger from them, till they came close along side of him and plainly discovered their design, by their Number and Actions, and then he called up his hands upon Deck, and having about 90 Hands on board, & 8 Guns

mounted, the Sloop and Frenchmen fell an easy prey to him, and he made a Privateer of her.

After this they cruised for some time thro' the West Indies, in which excursion they took 7 or 8 Sail of Vessels, chiefly Sloops; at Length they came to Santa Cruiz, where they took two Sloops more, & then came to Anchor off the Island.

While they lay an Anchor here, it came into Low's Head, that he wanted a Doctor's Chest, & in order to procure one, he put four of the Frenchmen on board one of the Sloops, which he had just now taken, & sent them away to St. Thomas's, about 12 Leagues off where the Sloops belonged, with the promise, that if they would presently send him off a good Doctor's Chest, for what he sent to Purchase it with, they should have their Men & Vessels again, but if not, he would kill all the Men & burn the Vessels. The poor People in Compassion to their Neighbours, & to preserve their Interest, readily complyed with his Demands; so that in little more than 24 Hours the four Frenchmen returned with what they went for, & then according to promise, they & their Sloops were Dismissed.

From Santa Cruz they Sailed till they made Curacao, in which Passage they gave Chase to two Sloops that out sailed them & got clear; then they Ranged the Coast of New Spain, 14 and made Carthagena, & about mid-way between Carthagena and Port-Abella, [Porto Carbella] they descry'd two tall Ships, which proved to be the Mermaid Man of War, & a large Guinea-Man. Low was now in the Rhode Island Sloop, & one Farrington Spriggs 15 a Quarter-Master, was Commander of the Schooner, where I still was. For some time they made Sail after the two Ships, till they came so near that they could plainly see the Man of War's large range of Teeth, & then they turned Tail to, and made the best of their way from them; upon which the Man of War gave them Chase & overhalled them apace. And now I confess I was in as great terrour as ever I had been yet, for I concluded we

should be taken, & I could expect no other butt to Dye for Companions sake; so true is what Solomon tells us, a Companion of Fools shall be destroyed. But the Pirates finding the Man of War to overhale them, separated, & Low stood out to Sea, & Spriggs stood in for the Shoar. The Man of War observing the Sloop to be the larger Vessel much, and fullest of Men, threw out all the Sail she could, & stood after her, and was in a fair way of coming up with her presently: But it hapened there was one Man on board the Sloop, that knew of a Shoal Ground thereabouts, who directed Low to run over it; he did so; and the Man of War who had now so forereached him as to fling a Shot over him, in the close pursuit ran a Ground upon the Shoal, and so Low and Company escaped Hanging for this time.

Spriggs, who was in the Schooner, when he saw the Danger they were in of being taken, upon the Man of War's out sailing them, was afraid of falling into the hands of Justice; to prevent which, he, and one of his Chief Companions, took their Pistols, and laid them down by them, and solemnly Swore to each other, and pledg'd the Oath in a Bumper of Liquor, that if they saw there was at last no possibility of Escaping, but that they should be taken, they would set Foot to Foot, and Shoot one another, to Escape Justice and the Halter. As if Divine Justice were not as inexorable as Humane!

But, as I said, he stood in for the Shoar, and made into *Pickeroon Bay*, about 18 Leagues from *Carthagena*, and so got out of reach of Danger. By this means the Sloop and Schooner were parted; and *Spriggs* made Sail towards the Bay of *Honduras*, and came to Anchor in a small Island called *Utilla*, about 7 or 8 Leagues to Leeward of *Roatan*, <sup>16</sup> where by the help of a small Sloop, he had taken the Day before, he haled down, and cleaned the Schooner.

While Spriggs lay at Utilla, there was an Opportunity presented, which gave occasion to several of us to form a design, of making our Escape out of the Pirates Company; for having lost

Low, and being but weak handed, Spriggs had determined to go thro' the Gulf, and come upon the Coast of New-England, to encrease his Company, and supply himself with Provision; whereupon a Number of us had entred into a Combination, to take the first fair advantage, to Subdue our Masters; and Free our selves. There were in all about 22 Men on board the Schooner, and 8 of us were in the Plot, which was, That when we should come upon the Coast of New-England, we would take the opportunity when the Crew had sufficiently dozed themselves with Drink, and had got sound a Sleep, to secure them under the Hatches, and bring the Vessel and Company in, and throw ourselves upon the Mercy of the Government.

But it pleased GOD to disappoint our Design. The Day that they came to Sail out of Utilla, after they had been parted from Low about five Weeks, they discovered a large Sloop, which bore down upon them. Spriggs, who knew not the Sloop, but imagined it might be a Spanish Privateer, full of Men, being but weak handed himself, made the best of his way from her. The Sloop greatly overhaled the Schooner. Low, who knew the Schooner, & thought that since they had been separated, she might have fallen into the hands of honest Men, fired upon her, & struck her the first Shot. Spriggs seeing the Sloop fuller of Men than ordinary, (for Low had been to Honduras, & had taken a Sloop, & brought off several Baymen, & was now become an Hundred strong) & remaining still ignorant of his old Mate, refused to bring to, but continued to make off; and resolved if they came up with him, to fight them the best he could. Thus the Harpies had like to had fallen foul of one another. But Low hoisting his Pirate Colours, discovered who he was; and then, hideous was the noisy Joy among the Piratical Crew, on all sides, accompanied with Firing, & Carousing, at the finding their Old Master, & Companions, & their narrow Escape: and so the design of Crusing upon the Coast of New-England came to nothing. A good Providence it was to my dear Country, that it did so; unless

Flame.

we could have timely succeeded in our design to surprise them.

Yet it had like to have proved a fatal Providence to those of us that had a hand in the Plot; for tho' our design of surprising Spriggs and Company, when we should come upon the Coast of New-England, was carried with as much secrecy as was possible, (we hardly daring to trust one another, and mentioning it always with utmost privacy, and not plainly, but in distant hints) yet now that Low appeared, Spriggs had got an account of it some way or other; and full of Resentment and Rage he goes aboard Low, and acquaints him with what he called our Treacherous design, and says all he can to provoke him to Revenge the Mischief upon us, and earnestly urged that we might be shot. But GOD who has the Hearts of all Men in His own Hands, and turns them as He pleases, so over ruled, that Low turned it off with a Laugh, and said he did not know, but if it had been his own case, as it was ours, he should have done so himself; and all that Spriggs could say was not able to stir up his Resentments, and procure any heavy Sentence upon us.

Thus Low's merry Air saved us at that time; for had he lisped a Word in compliance with what Spriggs urged, we had surely some of us, if not all, have been lost. Upon this he comes on board the Schooner again, heated with Drink, but more chased in his own mind, that he could not have his Will of us, and swore & tore like a Mad-man, crying out that four of us ought to go forward, & be shot; and to me in particular he said, You D-g, Ashton, deserve to be hang'd up at the Yards-Arm, for designing to cut us off. I told him, I had no design of hurting any man on board, but if they would let me go away quietly I should be glad. This matter made a very great noise on board for several Hours, but at length the Fire was quenched, and thro' the Good-

The next Day, Low ordered all into Roatan Harbour to clean, and here it was that thro' the Favour of GOD to me, I first

ness of GOD, I escaped being consumed by the violence of the

gained Deliverance out of the Pirates hands; tho' it was a long while before my Deliverance was perfected, in a return to my Country, and Friends; as you will see in the Sequel.

Roatan Harbour, as all about the Gulf of Honduras, is full of small Islands, which go by the General Name of the Keys. When we had got in here, Low and some of his Chief Men had got a shoar upon one of these small Islands, which they called Port-Royal Key, where they made them Booths, and were Carousing, Drinking, and Firing, while the two Sloops, the Rhode-Island, and that which Low brought with him from the Bay were cleaning. As for the Schooner, he loaded her with the Logwood which the Sloop brought from the Bay, & gave her, according to promise, to one John Blaze, and put four men along with him in her, and when they came to Sail from this Place, sent them away upon their own account, and what became of them I know not.

Upon Saturday the 9th of March, 1723, the Cooper with Six hands in the Long-Boat were going ashore at the Watering place to fill their Casks; as he came along by the Schooner I called to him and asked him, if he were going a shoar? he told me Yes; then I asked him, if he would take me along with him; he seemed to hesitate at the first; but I urged that I had never been on shoar yet, since I first came on board, and I thought it very hard that I should be so closely confined, when every one else had the Liberty of going ashoar, at several times, as there was occasion. At length he took me in, imagining, I suppose, that there would be no danger of my Running away in so desolate uninhabitated a Place, as that was.

I went into the Boat with only an Ozenbrigs<sup>17</sup> Frock and Trousers on, and a Mill'd Cap upon my Head, having neither Shirt, Shoes, nor Stockings, nor any thing else about me; whereas, had I been aware of such an Opportunity, but one quarter of an Hour before, I could have provided my self something better. However, thought I, if I can but once get footing on Terra Firma, tho' in never so bad Circumstances, I shall count it a

happy Deliverance; for I was resolved, come what would, never to come on board again.

Low had often told me (upon my asking him to send me away in some of the Vessels, which he dismissed after he had taken them), that I should go home when he did, and not before, and Swore that I should never set foot on shoar till he did. But the time for Deliverance was now come. GOD had ordered it that Low and Spriggs, and almost all the Commanding Officers, were ashoar upon an Island distinct from Roatan, where the Watering place was; He presented me in sight, when the Long Boat came by, (the only opportunity I could have had) He had moved the Cooper to take me into the Boat, and under such Circumstances as rendred me least lyable to Suspicion; and so I got ashoar.

When we came first to Land, I was very Active in helping to get the Cask out of the Boat, & Rowling them up to the Watering place; then I lay down at the Fountain & took a hearty Draught of the Cool Water; & anon, I gradually strol'd along the Beech, picking up Stones & Shells, & looking about me; when I had got about Musket Shot off from them (tho' they had taken no Arms along with them in the Boat) I began to make up to the Edge of the Woods; when the Cooper spying me, call'd after me, & asked me where I was going; I told him I was going to get some Coco-Nuts, for there were some Coco-Nut Trees just before me. So soon as I had recovered the Woods, and lost sight of them, I betook my self to my Heels, & ran as fast as the thickness of the Bushes, and my naked Feet would let me. I bent my Course, not directly from them, but rather up behind them, which I continued till I had got a considerable way into the Woods, & yet not so far from them but that I could hear their talk, when they spake any thing loud; and here I lay close in a very great Thicket, being well assured, if they should take the pains to hunt after me never so carefully they would not be able to find me.

After they had filled their Casks and were about to go off, the

Cooper called after me to come away; but I lay snug in my Thicket, and would give him no Answer, tho' I plainly eno' heard him. At length they set a hallooing for me, but I was still silent; I could hear them say to one another, The D-g is lost in the Woods, and can't find the way out again; then they hallooed again; and cried, he is run-away and won't come again; the Cooper said, if he had thought I would have served him so, he would not have brought me ashoar. They plainly saw it would be in vain to seek me in such hideous Woods, and thick Brushes. When they were weary with hallooing, the Cooper at last, to shew his good Will to me, (I can't but Love and Thank him for his Kindness) call'd out, If you don't come away presently, I'll go off and leave you alone. But all they could say was no Temptation to me to discover my self, and least of all that of their going away and leaving me; for this was the very thing I desired, that I might be rid of them, and all that belonged to them. So finding it in vain for them to wait any longer, they put off with their Water, without me; and thus was I left upon a desolate Island destitute of all help, and much out of the way of all Travellers; however this Wilderness I looked upon as Hospitable, and this Loneliness as good Company, compared with the State and Society I was now happily Delivered from.

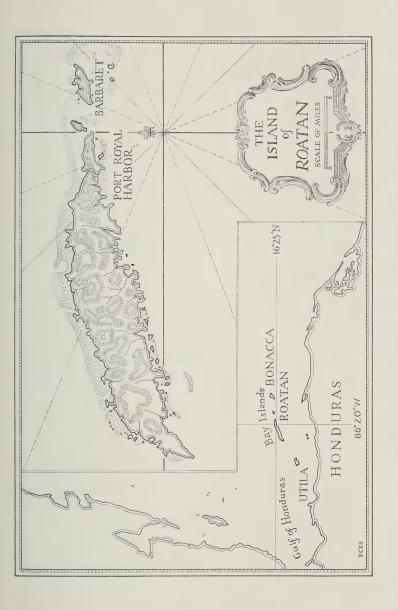
When I supposed they were gone off, I came out of my Thicket, and drew down to the Water side, about a Mile below the Watering place, where there was a small run of Water; and here I sat down to observe their Motions, and know when the Coast was clear; for I could not but have some remaining fears lest they should send a Company of Armed Men after me; yet I thought if they should, the Woods and Bushes were so thick that it would be impossible they should find me. As yet I had nothing to Eat, nor indeed were my Thoughts much concerned about living in this Desolate Place, but they were chiefly taken up about my geting clear. And to my Joy, after the Vessels had stayed five Days in this Harbour, they came to Sail, and put out to Sea,

and I plainly saw the Schooner part from the two Sloops, and shape a different Course from them.

When they were gone and the Coast clear, I began to reflect upon my self, and my present Condition; I was upon an Island from whence I could not get off; I knew of no Humane Creature within many scores of Miles of me; I had but a Scanty Cloathing, and no possibility of getting more; I was destitute of all Provision for my Support, and knew not how I should come at any; every thing looked with a dismal Face; the sad prospect drew Tears from me in abundance; yet since GOD had graciously granted my Desires, in freeing me out of the hands of the Sons of Violence, whose Business 'tis to devise Mischief against their Neighbour, and from whom every thing that had the least face of Religion and Virtue was intirely Banished, (unless that Low would never suffer his Men to work upon the Sabbath, (it was more devoted to Play) and I have seen some of them sit down to Read in a good Book) therefore I purposed to account all the hardship I might now meet with, as Light, & Easy, compared with being Associated with them.

In order to find in what manner I was to Live for the time to come, I began to Range the Island over, which I suppose is some 10 or 11 Leagues Long, in the Latitude of 16 deg. 30 min. or thereabouts. I soon found that I must look for no Company, but the Wild Beast of the Field, and the Fowl of the Air; with all of which I made a Firm Peace, and GOD said Amen to it. I could discover no Footsteps of any Habitation upon the Island; yet there was one walk of Lime Trees near a Mile long, and ever now & then I found some broken Shreds of Earthen Pots, scattered here and there upon the Place, which some say are some remains of the *Indians* that formerly Lived upon the Island.

The Island is well Watered, and is full of Hills, high Mountains, and lowly Vallies. The Mountains are Covered over with a sort of shrubby black Pine, & are almost inaccessible. The Vallies



abound with Fruit Trees, and are so prodigiously thick with an underbrush, that 'tis difficult passing.

The Fruit were Coco-Nuts, but these I could have no advantage from, because I had no way of coming at the inside; there are Wild-Figs, and Vines in abundance, these I chiefly lived upon, especially at first; there is also a sort of Fruit growing upon Trees somewhat larger than an Orange, of an Oval shape, of a brownish Colour without, and red within, having two or three Stones about as large as a Walnut in the midst: tho' I saw many of these fallen under the Trees, yet I dared not to meddle with them for sometime, till I saw some Wild Hogs eat them with safety, and then I thought I might venture upon them too, after such Tasters, and I found them to be a very delicious sort of Fruit; they are called Mammees Supporters, 18 as I learned afterwards. There are also a sort of small Beech-Plumb, growing upon low shrubs; and a large form of Plumb growing upon Trees, which are called Hog-Plumbs; and many other sorts of Fruit which I am wholly a Stranger to. Only I would take notice of the Goodness of GOD to me, in preserving me from destroying my self by feeding upon any Noxious Fruit, as the Mangeneil Apple, 19 which I often took up in my hands, and look'd upon, but had not the power to eat of; which if I had, it would have been present Death to me, as I was informed afterwards, tho' I knew not what it was.

There are also upon this Island, and the Adjacent Islands, and Keys, Deer, and Wild Hogs; they abound too with Fowl of diverse sorts, as Ducks, Teil, Curlews, Galdings, (a Fowl long Legged, and shaped somewhat like a Heron, but not so big) Pellicans, Boobys, Pigeons, Parrotts, &c. and the Shoars abound with Tortoise.

But of all this Store of Beast, and Fowl, I could make no use to Supply my Necessities; tho' my Mouth often watered for a Bit of them; yet I was forced to go without it; for I had no Knife, or other Instrument of Iron with me, by which to cut up a *Tortoise*, when I had turned it; or to make Snares or Pitts, with which

to entrap, or Bows & Arrows with which to kill any Bird or Beast withal; nor could I by any possible means that I knew of, come at Fire to dress any if I had taken them, tho' I doubt not but some would have gone down Raw if I could have come at it.

I sometimes had thoughts of Digging Pits and covering them over with small Branches of Trees, & laying Brush and Leaves upon them to take some Hogs or Deer in; but all was vain imagination, I had no Shovel, neither could I find or make any thing that would answer my end, and I was presently convinced, that my Hands alone, were not sufficient to make one deep and large eno' to detain any thing that should fall into it: so that I was forced to rest satisfied with the Fruit of the Vine, and Trees, and looked upon it as good Provision, and very handy for one in my Condition.

In length of time, as I was poking about the Beech, with a Stick, to see if I could find any Tortoise Nests, (which I had heard lay their Eggs in the Sand) I brought up part of an Egg clinging to the Stick, and upon removing the Sand which lay over them, I found near an Hundred & Fifty Eggs which had not been laid long eno' to spoil; so I took some of them and eat them: And in this way I sometimes got some Eggs to Eat, which are not very good at the best, yet what is not good to him that has nothing to Live upon, but what falls from the Trees.

The Tortoise lay their Eggs above High Water Mark, in a hole which they make in the Sand, about a Foot, or a Foot and half deep, and cover them over with the Sand, which they make as smooth & even as any part of the Beech, so that there is no discerning where they are, by any, the least sign of a Hillock, or Rising; and according to my best observation, they Hatch in about 18 or 20 Days, and as soon as the Young Ones are Hatched they betake themselves immediately to the Water.

There are many Serpents upon this, and the Adjacent Islands. There is one sort that is very Large, as big round as a Man's Wast, tho' not above 12 or 14 Feet long. These are called

Owlers [Boas]. They look like old fallen Stocks of Trees covered over with a short Moss, when they lye at their length; but they more usually lye coiled up in a round. The first I saw of these greatly surprised me; for I was very near to it before I discovered it to be a Living Creature, and then it opened it's Mouth wide eno' to have thrown a Hat into it, and blew out its Breath at me. This Serpent is very slow in its motion, and nothing Venemous, as I was afterwards told by a Man, who said he had been once bitten by one of them. There are several other smaller Serpents, some of them very Venemous, particularly one that is called a Barber's Pole, 20 being streaked White and Yellow. But I met with no Rattle-Snakes there, unless the Pirates, nor did I ever hear of any other being there.

The Islands are also greatly infested with vexatious *Insects*, especially the *Musketto*, and a sort of small *Black Fly*, (something like a *Gnat*) more troublesome than the *Musketto*; so that if one had never so many of the comforts of Life about him, these Insects would render his Living here very burthensome to him; unless he retired to a small Key, destitute of Woods and Brush, where the Wind disperses the Vermin.

The Sea hereabouts, hath a variety of Fish; such as are good to Eat, I could not come at, and the Sharks, and Alligators or Crocodiles, I did not care to have any thing to do with; tho' I was once greatly endangered by a Shark, as I shall tell afterwards.

This was the Place I was confined to; this my Society and Fellowship; and this my State and Condition of Life. Here I spent near Nine Months; without Converse with any Living Creature; for the *Parrots* here had not been taught to Speak. Here I lingred out one Day after another, I knew not how, without Business, or Diversion; unless gathering up my Food, rambling from Hill to Hill, from Island to Island, gazing upon the Water, and staring upon the Face of the Sky, may be called so.

In this Lonely and Distressed Condition, I had time to call over my past Life; and Young as I was, I saw I had grown Old

in Sin; my Transgressions were more than my Days; and tho' GOD had graciously Restrained me from the Grosser Enormities of Life, yet I saw Guilt staring me in the Face; eno' to humble me and forever to vindicate the Justice of GOD in all that I underwent. I called to mind many things I had heard from the Pulpit, and what I had formerly Read in the Bible, which I was now wholly Destitute of, tho' I thought if I could but have one now, it would have sweetened my Condition, by the very Diversion of Reading, and much more from the Direction and Comfort it would have afforded me. I had some Comforts in the midst of my Calamity. It was no small Support to me, that I was about my Lawful Employment, when I was first taken; and that I had no hand in bringing my Misery upon my self, but was forced away sorely against my Will. It wonderfully alleviated my Sorrows, to think, that I had my Parents approbation, and consent in my going to Sea; and I often fancied to my self, that if I had gone to Sea against their will and pleasure, and had met with this Disaster, I should have looked upon it as a designed Punishment of such Disobedience, and the very Reflection on it would have so aggravated my Misery, as soon to have put an end to my Days. I looked upon my self also, as more in the way of the Divine Blessing now, than when I was linked to a Crew of Pirates, where I could scarce hope for Protection and a Blessing. I plainly saw very signal Instances of the Power & Goodness of GOD to me, in the many Deliverances which I had already experienced (the least of which I was utterly unworthy of) and this Encouraged me to put my Trust in Him; and tho' I had none but GOD to go to for help, yet I knew that He was able to do more for me than I could ask or think; to Him therefore I committed my self, purposing to wait hopefully upon the Lord till he should send Deliverance to me: Trusting that in his own time and way, he would find out means for my safe Return to my Fathers House; and earnestly entreating that he would provide a better place for me.

It was my Daily Practice to Ramble from one part of the Island to an other, tho' I had a more special Home near to the Water side. Here I had built me a House to defend me from the heat of the Sun by Day, and the great Dews of the Night. I took some of the best Branches I could find fallen from the Trees, and stuck them in the Ground; and I contrived as often as I could (for I built many such Huts) to fix them leaning against the Limb of a Tree that hung low; I split the Palmeto Leaves and knotted the Limb & Sticks together; then I covered them over with the largest and best Palmeto Leaves I could find. I generally Situated my Hut near the Water side, with the open part of it facing the Sea, that I might be the more ready upon the look out, and have the advantage of the Sea Breez, which both the Heat and the Vermin required. But the Vermin, the Muskettos and Flys, grew so troublesome to me, that I was put upon contrivance to get rid of their Company. This led me to think of getting over to some of the Adjacent Keys, that I might have some Rest from the disturbance of these busy Companions. My greatest difficulty lay in getting over to any other Island; for I was but a very poor Swimmer; and I had no Canoo, nor any means of making one. At length I got a piece of Bamboe, which is hollow like a Reed, and light as a Cork, and having made tryall of it under my Breast and Arms in Swimming by the shoar; with this help I e'en ventured to put off for a small Key about Gun-shot off, and I reached it pretty comfortably. This Key was but about 3 or 400 Feet in compass, clear of Woods & Brush, & lay very low: & I found it so free from the Vermin, by the free Passage of the Wind over it, that I seemed to be got into a New World, where I lived more at ease. This I kept as a place of Retreat, whither I retired when the Heat of the Day rendred the Fly-kind most troublesome to me: for I was obliged to be much upon Roatan for the sake of my Food, Water, & House. When I swam backward & forward from my Night to my Day Island, I used to bind my Frock & Trousers about my Head, but I could not so easily carry over Wood & Leaves to make a Hut of; else I should have spent more of my time upon my little Day Island.

My Swimming thus backward & forward exposed me to some Danger. Once I Remember as I was passing from my Day to my Night Island, the Bamboe got from under me e'er I was aware, & the Tide or Current set so strong, that I was very difficulty put to it to recover the Shoar; so that a few Rods more distance had in all probability landed me in another World. At another time as I was Swimming over to my Day Island, a Shovel nos'd Shark, (of which the Seas thereabouts are full, as well as Alligators) struck me in the Thigh just as I set my Foot to Ground, & so grounded himself (Isuppose) by the shoalness of the Water, that he could not turn himself to come at me with his Mouth, & so, thro' the Goodness of GOD, I escaped falling a Prey to his devouring Teeth. I felt the Blow he gave me some hours after I had got ashoar. By accustoming my self to Swim, I at length grew pretty dexterous at it, and often gave my self the Diversion of thus passing from one Island to another among the Keys.

One of my greatest difficulties lay in my being Bare-foot, my Travels backward & forward in the Woods to hunt for my Daily Food, among the thick under-brush, where the Ground was covered with sharp Sticks & Stones, & upon the hot Beech among the sharp broken Shells, had made so many Wounds and Gashes in my Feet, & some of them very large, that I was hardly able to go at all. Very often as I was treading with all the tenderness I could, a sharp Stone or Shell on the Beech or pointed Stick in the Woods, would run into the Old Wounds, & the Anguish of it would strike me down as suddenly as if I had been shot thro', & oblige me to set down and Weep by the hour together at the extremity of my Pain: so that in process of time I could Travel no more than needs must, for the necessary procuring of Food. Sometimes I

have sat leaning my Back against a Tree, with my Face to the Sea, to look out for the passing of a Vessel for a whole Day to-

gether.

At length I grew very Weak & Faint, as well as Sore and Bruised; and once while I was in this Condition, a Wild Boar seemed to make at me with some Fierceness; I knew not what to do with my self, for I was not able to defend my self against him if he should attack me. So as he drew nearer to me, I caught hold of the Limb of a Tree which was close by me, & drew my Body up by it from the Ground as well as I could; while I was in this Hanging posture, the Boar came and struck at me, but his Tushes only took hold of my shattered Trousers & tore a peice out; and then he went his way. This I think was the only time that I was assaulted by any Wild Beast, with whom I said I had made Peace; and I look upon it as a Great Deliverance.

As my Weakness encreased upon me, I should often fall down as tho' struck with a dead sleep, and many a time as I was thus falling, and sometimes when I lay'd my self down to Sleep, I never expected to wake or rise more; and yet in the midst of all GOD has Wonderfully preserved me.

In the midst of this my great Soreness & Feebleness I lost the Days of the Week, & how long I had layn in some of my numb sleepy Fits I knew not, so that I was not able now to distinguish the Sabbath from any other Day of the Week; tho' all Days were in some sort a Sabbath to me. As my Illness prevailed I wholly lost the Month, and knew not where abouts I was in the Account of Time.

Under all this Dreadful Distress, I had no healing Balsames to apply to my Feet, no Cordials to revive my Fainting Spirits, hardly able now & then to get me some Figs or Grapes to Eat, nor any possible way of coming at a Fire, which the Cool Winds, & great Rains, beginning to come on now called for. The Rains begin about the middle of October, & continue for Five Months together, and then the Air is Raw Cold, like our North East Storms

of Rain; only at times the Sun breaks out with such an exceeding Fierceness, that there is hardly any enduring the Heat of it.

I had often heard of the fetching Fire by Rubbing of two Sticks together; but I could never get any this way; tho' I had often tried while I was in Health and Strength, untill I was quite tired. Afterwards I learned the way of getting Fire from two Sticks, which I will Publish, that it may be of Service to any that may be hereafter in my Condition.

Take Two Sticks, the one of harder the other softer Wood, the dryer the better, in the soft Wood make a sort of Mortice or Socket, point the harder Wood to fit that Socket; hold the softer Wood firm between the Knees, take the harder Wood between your Hands with the point fixed in the Socket, and rub the Stick in your Hands backward & forward briskly like a Drill, and it will take Fire in less than a Minute; as I have sometimes since seen, upon experiment made of it.

But then I knew of no such Method (and it may be should have been difficulty put to it to have formed the Mortice and Drill for want of a Knife) and I suffered greatly without a Fire, thro' the chillness of the Air, the Wetness of the Season, and Living only upon Raw Fruit.

Thus I pass'd about Nine Months in this lonely, melancholy, wounded, and languishing Condition. I often lay'd my self down as upon my last Bed, & concluded I should certainly Dye alone, & no Body knew what was become of me. I thought it would be some relief to me if my Parents could but tell where I was; and then I thought their Distress would be exceeding great, if they knew what I under went. But all such thoughts were vain. The more my Difficulties encreased, and the nearer prospect I had of Dying, the more it drove me upon my Knees, and made me the more earnest in my Crys to my Maker for His favourable regards to me, and to the Great Redeemer to pardon me, and provide for my after well being.

And see the surprising Goodness of GOD to me, in sending

me help in my time of trouble, & that in the most unexpected way & manner, as tho' an Angel had been commissioned from Heaven to relieve me.

Sometime in November, 1723, I espied a small Canoo, coming towards me with one Man in it. It did not much surprise me. A Friend I could not hope for; and I could not resist, or hardly get out of the way of an Enemy, nor need I fear one. I kept my Seat upon the Edge of the Beech. As he came nearer he discovered me & seemed greatly surprised. He called to me. I told him whence I was, & that he might safely venture ashoar, for I was alone, & almost Dead. As he came up to me, he stared & look'd wild with surprise; my Garb & countenance astonished him; he knew not what to make of me; he started back a little, & viewed me more thorowly; but upon recovering of himself, he came forward, & took me by the Hand & told me he was glad to see me. And he was ready as long as he stayed with me, to do any kind offices for me.

He proved to be a *North-Britain* [Scotsman], a Man well in Years, of a Grave and Venerable Aspect, and of a reserved Temper. His Name I never knew, for I had not asked him in the little time he was with me, expecting a longer converse with him; and he never told me it. But he acquainted me that he had lived with the *Spaniards* 22 Years, and now they threatened to Burn him, I knew not for what Crime: therefore he had fled for Sanctuary to this Place, & had brought his Gun, Ammunition, and Dog, with a small quantity of Pork, designing to spend the residue of his Days here, & support himself by Hunting. He seemed very kind & obliging to me, gave me some of his Pork, and assisted me all he could; tho' he conversed little.

Upon the Third Day after he came to me, he told me, he would go out in his Canoo among the Islands, to kill some Wild Hogs & Deer, and would have had me to go along with him. His Company, the Fire and a little dressed Provision something recruited my Spirits; but yet I was so Weak, and Sore in my Feet,

that I could not accompany him in Hunting: So he set out alone, and said he would be with me again in a Day or two. The Sky was Serene and Fair, and there was no prospect of any Danger in his little Voyage among the Islands, when he had come safe in that small Float near 12 Leagues; but by that time he had been gone an Hour, there arose a most Violent Gust of Wind and Rain, which in all probability overset him; so that I never saw nor heard of him any more. And tho' by this means I was deprived of my Companion, yet it was the Goodness of GOD to me, that I was not well eno' to go with him; for thus I was preserved from that Destruction which undoubtedly over took him.

Thus after the pleasure of having a Companion almost Three Days, I was as unexpectedly reduced to my former lonely Condition, as I had been for a little while recovered out of it. It was grievous to me to think, that I no sooner saw the Dawnings of Light, after so long Obscurity, but the Clouds returned after the Rain upon me. I began to experience the Advantage of a Companion, and find that Two is better than One, and flattered my self, that by the help of some fresh Hogs Grease, I should get my Feet well, and by a better Living recover more Strength. But it pleased GOD to take from me the only Man I had seen for so many Months after so short a Converse with him. Yet I was left in better Circumstances by him than he found me in. For at his going away he left with me about Five Pound of Pork, a Knife, a Bottle of Powder, Tobacco Tongs and Flint, by which means I was in a way to Live better than I had done. For now I could have a Fire, which was very needful for me, the Rainy Months of the Winter; I could cut up some Tortoise when I had turned them, and have a delicate broiled Meal of it: So that by the help of the Fire, and dressed Food, and the Blessing of GOD accompanying it, I began to recover more Strength, only my Feet remained Sore.

Besides, I had this Advantage now, which I had not before, that I could go out now and then and catch a Dish of Cray-Fish,

a Fish much like a Lobster, only wanting the great Claws. My manner of catching them was odd; I took some of the best peices of the old broken small Wood, that came the nearest to our Pitch Pine, or Candle-Wood, and made them up into a small Bundle like a Torch, and holding one of these lighted at one End in one hand, I waded into the Water upon the Beech up to my Wast: the Cray-Fish spying the Light at a considerable distance, would crawl away till they came directly under it, and then they would lye still at my Feet. In my other hand I had a Forked Stick with which I struck the Fish and tossed it ashoar. In this manner I supplyed my self with a Mess of Shell-Fish, which when roasted is very good Eating.

Between two and three Months after I had lost my Companion, as I was ranging a long shoar, I found a small Canoo. The sight of this at first renewed my Sorrows for his Loss; for I thought it had been his Canoo, and it's coming ashore thus, was a proof to me that he was lost in the Tempest: but upon further Examination of it I found it was one I had never seen before.

When I had got this little Vessel in possession, I began to think my self Admiral of the Neighbouring Seas, as well as Sole Possessor and Chief Commander upon the Islands; and with the advantage hereof I could transport my self to my small Islands of Retreat, much more conveniently than in my former Method of Swimming. In process of time I tho't of making a Tour to some of the more distant and larger Islands, to see after what manner they were inhabitated, and how they were provided, and partly to give my self the Liberty of Diversions. So I lay'd in a small parcel of *Grapes* and *Figs*, and some *Tortoise*, & took my Fire-Works with me, and put off for the Island of *Bonacco*, an Island of about 4 or 5 Leagues long, and some 5 or 6 Leagues to the Eastward of *Roatan*.

As I was upon my Voyage I discovered a Sloop at the Eastern End of the Island; so I made the best of my way, and put in at the Western End; designing to travel down to them by Land,

partly because there ran out a large point of Rocks far into the Sea, and I did not care to venture my self so far out in my little Canoo as I must do to head them: & partly because I was willing to make a better discovery of them, before I was seen by them; for in the midst of my most deplorable Circumstances, I could never entertain the thoughts of returning on board any Pirate, if I should have the opportunity, but had rather Live and Dye as I was. So I haled up my Canoo, and fastened her as well as I could, and set out upon my Travel.

I spent two Days, and the biggest part of two Nights in Travelling of it; my Feet were yet so sore that I could go but very slowly, and sometimes the Woods and Bushes were so thick that I was forced to Crawl upon my Hands and Knees for half a Mile together. In this Travel I met with an odd Adventure that had like to have proved fatal to me, and my preservation was an eminent Instance of the Divine Conduct and Protection.

As I drew within a Mile or two of where I supposed the Sloop might be, I made down to the Water side, and slowly opened the Sea, that I might not discover my self too soon; when I came down to the Waterside I could see no sign of the Sloop, upon which I concluded that it was gone clear, while I spent so much time in Travelling. I was very much tired with my long tedious March, and sat my self down leaning against the Stock of a Tree facing to the Sea, and fell a Sleep. But I had not slept long before I was awakened in a very surprising manner, by the noise of Guns. I started up in a fright, and saw Nine Periaguas, or large Canooes, full of Men firing upon me. I soon turned about and ran as fast as my sore Feet would let me into the Bushes; and the Men which were Spaniards, cryed after me, O Englishman, we'll give you good Quarter. But such was the Surprise I had taken, by being awakened out of Sleep in such a manner, that I had no command of my self to hearken to their offers of Quarter, which it may be at another time under cooler thoughts I might have done. So I made into the Woods, and they continued Firing after me, to the Number of 150 small Shot at least, many of which cut off several small twigs of the Bushes along side of me as I went off. When I had got out of the reach of their Shot, into a very great Thicket, I lay close for several Hours; and perceiving they were gone by the noise of their Oars in Rowing off, I came out of my Thicket, and Travelled a Mile or two along the Water side, below the place where they Fired upon me, and then I saw the Sloop under English Colours, Sailing out of the Harbour, with the Periaguas in tow; and then I concluded that it was an English Sloop that had been at the Bay, whom the *Spaniards* had met with and taken.

The next Day I went up to the Tree, where I so narrowly Escaped being taken Napping, and there to my surprise I found 6 or 7 Shot had gone into the Body of the Tree, within a Foot or less of my Head as I sat down; & yet thro' the wonderful goodness of GOD to me, in the midst of all their Fire, and tho' I was as a Mark set up for them to shoot at, none of their Shot touched me. So did GOD as yet signally preserve me.

After this I Travelled away for my Canoo at the Western End of the Island, and spent near three Days e'er I reached it. In this Long March backward and forward, I suffered very much from the Soreness of my Feet, & the want of Provision; for this Island is not so plentifully stored with Fruit as Roatan is, so that I was very difficultly put to it for my Subsistence, for the 5 or 6 Days that I spent here; and besides the Musketoes and Black Flys were abundantly more numerous, and vexatious to me than at my old Habitation. The Difficulties I met with here made me lay aside all thoughts of tarrying any time to search the Island. At length much tired and spent I reached my Canoo, and found all safe there, to my great Joy; and then I put off for Roatan, which was a Royal Palace to me in comparison of Bonacco, where I arrived to my great Satisfaction about Ten a Clock at Night, & found all things as I left them.

Here I Lived (if it may be called Living) alone for about

Seven Months more, from the time of my loosing my North British Companion; and spent my time after my usual manner in Hunting for my Food, and Ranging the Islands; till at length it pleased GOD, to send some Company to me with whom I could Converse, and enjoy somewhat more of the Comforts of Life.

Sometime in June, 1724, as I was upon my small Island, where I often retired for Shelter from the pestering Insects, I saw two large Canooes making into the Harbour; as they drew near they saw the Smoak of the Fire which I had kindled, and wondring what it should mean came to a stand. I had fresh in my Memory what I met with at Banacco, and was very loth to run the risque of such another firing, and therefore steped to my Canoo upon the back side of my small Island, not above 100 feet off from me, and immediately went over to my great Mansion, where I had places of safety to Shelter me from the Designs of an Enemy, and Rooms large and spacious eno' to give a kindly welcome to any ordinary number of Friends. They saw me cross the Ferry of about Gun shot over, from my little to my great Island, and being as much afraid of Spaniards, as I was of Pirates, they drew very cautiously towards the shoar. I came down upon the Beech shewing my self openly to them; for their caution made me think they were no Pirates, and I did not much care who else they were; however, I thought I could call to them, and know what they were, before I should be in much danger from their shot; and if they proved such as I did not like, I could easily retire from them. But before I called, they, who were as full of fears as I could be, lay upon their Oars and hallooed to me, enquiring who I was, and whence I came; I told them I was an English Man, and had Run-away from the Pirates. Upon this they drew something nearer and enquired who was there besides my self; I assured them I was alone. Then I took my turn, and asked them who they were, and whence they came. They told me they were Bay-men, come from the Bay. This was comfortable News to me; so I bid them pull ashoar, there was no danger, I would stop

for them. Accordingly they put ashoar, but at some distance from me, and first sent one Man ashoar to me; whom I went to meet. When the Man came up to me he started back, frighted to see such a Poor, Ragged, Lean, Wan, Forlorn, Wild, Miserable Object so near him: but upon recovering himself, he came and took me by the hand, and we fell to embracing one another, he with surprise and wonder, I with a sort of Extasy of Joy. After this was over he took me in his Arms and carried me down to their Canooes, where they were all struck with astonishment at the sight of me, were glad to receive me, and expressed a very great tenderness to me.

I gave them a short History how I had escaped from Low, and had lived here alone for Sixteen Months, (saving three days) what hardship I had met with, and what danger I had run thro'. They stood amazed! They wondred I was alive! and expressed a great satisfaction in it, that they were come to relieve me. And observing I was weak, and my Spirits low, they gave me about a Spoonful of Rhum to recruit my fainting Spirits. This small quantity, thro' my long disuse of any Liquor higher Spirited than Water, and my present weakness, threw my Animal Spirits into such a violent Agitation, as to obstruct their Motion, and produced a kind of Stupor, which left me for some time bereft of all Sense; some of them perceiving me falling into such a strange Insensibility, would have given me more of the same Spirit to have recovered me; but those of them that had more wit, would not allow of it. So I lay for some small time in a sort of a Fit, and they were ready to think that they should lose me as soon as they had found me. But I revived.

And when I was so thorowly come to my self as to converse with them, I found they were Eighteen Men come from the Bay of *Honduras*, the chief of which were, *John Hope*, and *John Ford*. The occasion of their coming from the Bay was, a Story they had got among them, that the *Spaniards* had projected to make a descent upon them by Water, while the *Indians* were to assault

them by Land, and cut off the Bay; and they retired hither to avoid the Destruction that was designed. This John Hope and Ford had formerly, upon a like occasion, sheltered themselves among these Islands, and lived for four Years together upon a small Island called Barbarat, about two Leagues from Roatan, where they had two Plantations, as they called them; and being now upon the same design of retreating for a time for Safety, they brought with them two Barrels of Flower, with other Provisions, their Fire-Arms, Ammunition and Dogs for Hunting, and Nets for tortoise, and an Indian woman to dress their Provisions for them. They chose for their chief Residence a small Key about a quarter of a Mile Round, lying near to Barbarat, which they called the Castle of Comfort, chiefly because it was low, and clear of Woods and Bushes, where the Wind had an open passage, and drove away the pestering Muskettoes and Gnats. From hence they sent to the other Islands round about for Wood and Water, and for Materials, with which they Built two Houses, such as they were, for Shelter.

And now I seemed to be in a far more likely way to Live pretty tollerably, than in the Sixteen Months past; for besides the having Company, they treated me with a great deal of Civility, in their way; they Cloathed me, and gave me a large sort of Wrapping Gown to lodge in a Nights to defend me from the great Dews, till their Houses were Covered; and we had plenty of Provision. But after all they were Bad Company, and there was but little difference between them and the Pirates, as to their Common Conversation; only I thought they were not now engaged in any such bad design as rendered it unlawful to Joyn with them, nor dangerous to be found in their Company.

In process of time, by the Blessing of GOD, & the Assistance I received from them, I gathered so much Strength that I was able sometimes to go out a Hunting with them. The Islands hereabouts, I observed before, abound with Wild Hogs and Deer, and Tortoise. Their manner was to go out a number of them in

a Canoo, sometimes to one Island, sometimes to another, and kill what Game they could meet with, and Firk their Pork, 21 by beginning at one end of a Hog and cutting along to the other end, and so back again till they had gone all over him, and flee the flesh in long strings off from the Bones; the Venison they took whole or in quarters, and the Tortoise in like manner; and return home with a load of it; what they did not spend presently, they hung up in their House a smoak drying; and this was a ready supply to them at all times.

I was now ready to think my self out of the reach of any danger from an Enemy, for what should bring any here? and I was compassed continually with a Number of Men with their Arms ready at hand; and yet when I thought my self most secure, I very narrowly escaped falling again into the hands of the Pirates.

It happened about 6 or 7 Months after these Bay-men came to me, That three Men and I took a Canoo with four Oars, to go over to Banacco, a Hunting and to kill Tortoise. While we were gone the rest of the Bay-men haled up their Canooes, and Dryed and Tarred them, in order to go to the Bay and see how matters stood there, and to fetch off their Effects which they had left behind them, in case they should find there was no safety for them in tarrying. But before they were gone, we, who had met with good Success in our Voyage, were upon our return to them with a full load of Tortoise and Firkt Pork. As we were upon entring into the Mouth of the Harbour, in a Moon-light Evening, we saw a great Flash of Light, and heard the report of a Gun, which we thought was much louder than a Musket, out of a large Periagua, which we saw near our Castle of Comfort. This put us into a great Consternation, and we knew not what to make of it. Within a Minute or two we heard a Volley of 18 or 20 small Arms discharged upon the shoar, and heard some Guns also fired off from the shoar. Upon which we were satisfied that some Enemy, Pirates or Spaniards were attacking our People, and being cut off from our Companions, by the Periaguas which lay between us and them, we thought it our wisest way to save our selves as well as we could. So we took down our little Mast and Sail, that it might not betray us, and rowed out of the Harbour as fast as we could; thinking to make our Escape from them undiscovered, to an Island about a Mile and half off. But they either saw us before we had taken our Sail down, or heard the noise of our Oars as we made out of the Harbour, and came after us with all speed, in a Periagua of 8 or 10 Oars. We saw them coming, & that they gained ground upon us apace, & therefore pull'd up for Life, resolving to reach the nearest shoar if possible. The Periagua overhaled us so fast that they discharged a Swivel Gun at us, which over-shot us; but we made a shift to gain the shoar before they were come fairly within the reach of their small Arms; which yet they fired upon us, as we were getting ashoar. Then they called to us, and told us they were Pirates, and not Spaniards, and we need not fear, they would give us good Quarter; supposing this would easily move us to surrender our selves to them. But they could not have mentioned any thing worse to discourage me from having any thing to do with them, for I had the utmost dread of a Pirate; and my first aversion to them was now strengthened with the just fears, that if I should fall into their hands again, they would soon make a Sacrifice of me, for my Deserting them. I therefore concluded to keep as clear of them as I could; and the Bay-men with me had no great inclination to be medling with them, and so we made the best of our way into the Woods. They took away our Canoo from us, and all that was in it; resolving if we would not come to them, they would strip us, as far as they were able, of all means of Subsistance where we were. I who had known what it was to be destitute of all things, and alone, was not much concerned about that, now that I had Company, and they their Arms with them, so that we could have a supply of Provision by Hunting, and Fire to dress it with.

This Company it seems were some of *Spriggs* Men, who was Commander of the Schooner when I Ran away from them, This

same Spriggs, I know not upon what occasion, had cast off the Service of Low, and set up for himself as the Head of a Party of Rovers, and had now a good Ship of 24 Guns, and a Barmuda Sloop of 12 Guns, under his Command, which were now lying in Roatan Harbour, where he put in to Water and Clean, at the place where I first made my Escape. He had discovered our People upon the small Island, where they Resided, and sent a Periagua full of Men to take them. Accordingly they took all the Men ashoar, and with them an Indian Woman and Child; those of them that were ashoar abused the Woman shamefully. They killed one Man after they were come ashoar, and threw him into one of the Baymens Canooes where their Tar was, and set Fire to it, and burnt him in it. Then they carried our People on Board their Vessels, where they were barbarously treated.

One of the Baymen Thomas Grande, turned Pirate, and he being acquainted that Old Father Hope (as we called him) had hid many things in the Woods, told the Pirates of it, who beat poor Hope unmercifully, and made him go and shew them where he had hid his Treasure, which they took away from him.

After they had kept the Bay-men on board their Vessels for five Days, then they gave them a Flat, of about 5 or 6 Tons to carry them to the Bay in, but they gave them no Provision for their Voyage; and before they sent them away, they made them Swear to them, not to come near us, who had made our Escape upon another Island. All the while the Vessels rode in the Harbour, we kept a good look out, but were put to some difficulties, because we did not dare to make a Fire to dress our Victuals by, least it should discover whereabouts we were, so that we were forced to live upon Raw Provision for five Days. But as soon as they were gone, Father Hope with his Company of Bay-men, (little regarding an Oath, that was forced from them; and thinking it a wicked Oath, better broken, than to leave four of us in such a helpless Condition) came to us, and acquainted us who they were, and what they had done.

Thus the watchful Providence of GOD, which had so often heretofore appeared on my behalf, again took special care of me, and sent me out of the way of danger. 'Tis very apparent that if I had been with my Companions, at the usual Residence, I had been taken with them; and if I had, it is beyond question (humanely speaking) that I should not have escaped with Life, if I should the most painful and cruel Death, that the Madness and Rage of Spriggs could have invented for me; who would now have called to mind the design I was engaged in while we were parted from Low, as well as my final Deserting of them. But Blessed be GOD, who had designs on favour for me, and so ordered that I must at this time be absent from my Company.

Now Old Father Hope and his Company were all designed for the Bay; only one John Symonds, who had a Negro belonging to him, purposed to tarry here for some time, and carry on some sort of Trade with the Jamaica Men upon the Main. I longed to get home to New-England, and thought if I went to the Bay with them, it was very probable that I should in a little while meet with some New-England Vessel, that would carry me to my Native Country, from which I had been so long a poor Exile. I asked Father Hope, if he would take me with him, and carry me to the Bay. The Old Man, tho' he seemed glad of my Company, yet told me the many Difficulties that lay in the way; as that their Flat was but a poor thing to carry so many Men in for near 70 Leagues, which they must go before they would be out of the reach of Danger; that they had no Provision with them, and it was uncertain how the Weather would prove, they might be a great while upon their Passage thither, & their Flat could very poorly endure a great Sea; that when they should come to the Bay, they knew not how they should meet with things there, and they were Daily in Danger of being cut off; and it may be I should be longer there, in case all was well, than I cared for, e'er I should meet with a Passage for New-England; for the New-England Vessels often Sailed from the Bay to other Ports: so that all things considered, he thought I had better stay where I was, seeing I was like to have Company; whereas rather than I should be left alone he would take me in.

On the other hand, Symonds, who as I said designed to spend some time here, greatly urged me to stay and bear him Company. He told me that as soon as the Season would permit, he purposed to go over to the Main to the Jamaica Traders, where I might get a Passage to Jamaica, and from thence to New-England, probably quicker, and undoubtedly much safer than I could from the Bay; and that in the mean while I should fare as he did.

I did not trouble my self much about fareing, for I knew I could not fare harder than I had done; but I thought, upon the Consideration of the whole, that there seemed to be a fairer Prospect of my getting home by the way of Jamaica, than the Bay; and therefore I said no more to Father Hope about going with him, but concluded to stay. So I thanked Father Hope and Company for all their Civilities to me, wished them a good Voyage, and took leave of them.

And now there was John Symonds, and I, and his Negro left behind; and a good Providence of GOD was it for me that I took their Advice and stayed; for the I got not home by the way of Jamaica as was proposed, yet I did another and quicker way, in which there was more evident Interpositions of the Conduct of Divine Providence, as you will hear presently.

Symonds was provided with a Canoo, Fire-Arms, and two Dogs, as well as a Negro; with these he doubted not but we should be furnished of all that was necessary for our Subsistence; with this Company I spent between two and three Months after the usual manner in Hunting and Ranging the Islands. And yet the Winter Rains would not suffer us to hunt much more than needs must.

When the Season was near approaching for the Jamaica Traders to be over at the Main, Symonds proposed the going to some of the other Islands that abounded more with Tortoise, that he

might get the Shells of them, and carry to the Traders, and in Exchange furnish himself with Ozenbrigs and Shoes and such other necessaries as he wanted. We did so, and having got good store of *Tortoise* Shell, he then proposed to go first for *Bonacco*, which lies nearer to the Main than *Roatan*, that from thence we might take a favourable Snatch to run over.

Accordingly we went to *Bonacco*, and by that time we had been there about Five Days there came up a very hard *North*, which blew exceeding Fierce, and lasted for about three Days; when the heaft of the Storm was over, we saw several Vessels standing in for the Harbour; their number and largeness made me hope they might be Friends, and now an opportunity was coming in which Deliverance might be perfected to me.

The Larger Vessels came to Anchor at a great Distance off; but a Brigantine came over the Shoals, nearer in against the Watering place (for Bonacco as well as Roatan abounds with Water) which sent in her Boat with Cask for Water: I plainly saw they were Englishmen, and by their Garb & Air, and number, being but three Men in the Boat, concluded they were Friends, and shewed my self openly upon the Beech before them: as soon as they saw me they stop'd rowing, and called out to me to know who I was. I told them, and enquired who they were. They let me know they were honest Men, about their Lawful Business. I then called to them to come Ashoar, for there was no Body here that would hurt them. They came ashoar, and a happy meeting it was for me. Upon enquiry I found that the Vessels were the Diamond Man of War, and a Fleet under his Convoy, bound to Jamaica, (many whereof she had parted with in the late Storm) which by the violence of the North had been forced so far Southward, and the Man of War wanting Water, by reason of the Sickness of her Men which occasioned a great Consumption of it, had touched here, and sent in the Brigantine to fetch off Water for her. Mr. Symonds, who at first kept at the other end of the Beech, about half a Mile off, (lest the three Men in

the Boat should refuse to come ashoar, seeing two of us together), at length came up to us and became a sharer in my Joy, and yet not without some very considerable reluctance at the Thoughts of Parting. The Brigantine proved to be of Salem (within two or three Miles of my Fathers House) Capt. Dove<sup>22</sup> Commander, a Gentleman whom I knew. So now I had the prospect of a Direct Passage Home. I sent off to Capt. Dove, to know if he would give me a Passage home with him, and he was very ready to comply with my desire; and upon my going on Board him, besides the great Civilities he treated me with, he took me into pay; for he had lost a hand, and needed me to supply his place. The next Day the Man of War sent her Long Boat in, full of Cask, which they filled with Water, and put on Board the Brigantine, who carried them off to her. I had one Difficulty more to encounter with, which was to take leave of Mr. Symonds, who Wept heartily at parting; but this I was forced to go thro' for the Joy of getting Home.

So the latter end of *March*, 1725, we came to Sail, and kept Company with the Man of War, who was bound to *Jamaica*: the first of *April* we parted, and thro' the good hand of GOD upon us came safe thro' the Gulf of *Florida*, to *Salem*-Harbour, where we Arrived upon *Saturday*-Evening, the first of *May*: Two Years, Ten Months and Fifteen Days, after I was first taken by the Pirate *Low*; and Two Years, and near two Months after I had made my Escape from him upon *Roatan* Island. I went the same Evening to my Father's House, where I was received, as one coming to them from the Dead, with all Imaginable Surprise of Joy.

Thus I have given you a Short Account, how GOD has Conducted me thro' a great variety of Hardships and Dangers, and in all appeared Wonderfully Gracious to me. And I cannot but take notice of the strange concurrence of Divine Providence all along, in saving me from the Rage of the *Pirates*, and the Malice of the *Spaniards*, from the *Beasts* of the Field, and the *Monsters* of

the Sea; in keeping me alive amidst so many Deaths, in such a lonely and helpless Condition; and in bringing about my Deliverance: the last Articles whereof are as peculiarly Remarkable as any;—I must be just then gone over to Bonacco; a Storm must drive a Fleet of Ships so far Southward; and their want of Water must oblige them to put in at the Island where I was;— and a Vessel bound to my own Home must come and take me in.—Not unto Men and means, but unto thy Name, O Lord, be all the Glory! Amen.

Philip Ashton, Jun.





## A Short Account of

## Mr. Nicholas Merritt's

Escape from the *Pirates*, and his Sufferings, till his Return Home.



Was taken by the Pirate Low, in at Port-Rossaway, at the same time my Kinsman Philip Ashton was; and while I continued under Low's Custody was used much as he was; and all my entreaties of him to free me were but in vain; as you have seen something of in the

foregoing History: So that I shall not enlarge in telling how it fared with me under the Pirates hands, but only give some short Account of the manner of my Escape from them, and what I met with afterwards till I Arrived at *Marblehead*, where I belong.

Low had with him the Rose Pink, the Scooner, and a Sloop taken from one Pier of Bristol, and was standing away for Bonavista. I who was on board the Scooner had been greatly abused by an old Pirate, whom they called Jacob, but what his Sirname was I know not: I desired some that were upon occasion going on board Low, to acquaint him how much I was beat and abused by old Jacob; they did so; and Low ordered me to be put on board the Sloop. Thus the Foundation of my Escape was lay'd, and my Sufferings proved the means of my Deliverance.

On board the Sloop there were Nine hands, (one of them a

Portugue) whom Low had no Suspicion of, but thought he could trust them as much as any Men he had; and when I came on board I made the Tenth Man. We perceived that the Sloop greatly wronged both the Pink and Scooner, and there were Six of us (as we found by sounding one another at a distance) that wanted to get away. When we understood one anothers minds pretty fully, we resolved upon an Escape. Accordingly the Fifth of September, 1722, a little after break of Day, all hands being upon Deck, three of us Six went forward, and three aft, and one John Rhodes, who was a Stout hand, step'd into the Cabbin and took a couple of Pistols in his hands, and stood in the Cabbin Door, and said, If there were any that would go along with him, they should be welcome, for he designed to carry the Sloop home, and Surrender himself; but if any Man attempted to make resistance, he Swore he would shoot down the first Man that stirred. There being five of us that wanted to gain our Liberty, he was sure of us; and as for the other four they saw plainly it was in vain for them to attempt to oppose us. So we haled close upon a Wind, and stood away.

When we parted with Low, we had but a very little Water aboard, and but two or three pieces of Meat among us all; but we had Bread eno'. We designed for England; but our want of Water was so great, being put to half a Point a Man, and that very muddy and foul, from the time we parted with Low, and meeting with no Vessel of whom we could beg a Supply, that it made us come to a Resolution to put in at the first Port: so we Steered for St. Michaels, where we Arrived September, 26.

So soon as we got in, we sent a Man or two ashoar, to inform who we were, and to get us some Provisions & Water. The Consul who was a French Protestant, with a Magistrate, and some other Officers came on board us, to whom we gave an Account of our selves, and our Circumstances. The Consul told us, there should not a Hair of our Heads be hurt. Upon which we were all carried ashoar, and examined before the Governor; but

we understood nothing of their Language, and could make him no Answer, till one Mr. *Gould* a Linguistor was brought to us; and upon understanding our Case, the Governour cleared us. But the *Crusidore*, a sort of Superintendent over the Islands, whose power was Superiour to the Governours, refused to clear us, and put us in Jayl, where we lay 24 Hours.

The next Day we were brought under Examination again, and then we had for our Linguistor one Mr. John Curre, who had formerly been in New-England. We gave them as full and distinct Account as we could, where, and when, we were severally taken and how we had made our Escape from the Pirates. They brought several Witnesses Portuguese against us, as that we had taken them, and had Personally been Active in the Caption and Abuse of them, which yet they agreed not in; only they generally agreed that they heard some of us Curse the Virgin Mary, upon which the Crusidore would have condemned us all for Pirates. But the Governour, who thought we had acted the honest part, interposed on our behalf, and said, that it was very plain, that if these Men had been Pirates, they had no need to have left Low, and under such Circumstances, and come in here, and resign themselves, as they did; they could have stayed with their Old Companions, and have been easily eno' supplied with what they wanted; whereas their taking the first opportunity to get away from their Commander, and so poorly accommodated, was a proof to him, that we had no Piratical designs; and if he (the Crusidore) treated us at this rate, it was the way to make us, and all that had the unhappiness to fall into Pirates hands, turn Pirates with them. Yet all he could say would not wholly save us from the Angry Resentments of the Crusidore, who we thought was inflamed by the Portague that was among us. So he committed us all to Prison again: me with three others to the Castle, the rest to another Prison at some considerable distance off: and so much pains was taken to Swear us out of our Lives, that I altogether despaired of Escaping the Death of a Pirate; till a Gentleman, Capt. Littleton (if I mistake not) told me it was not in their power to hang us, and this comforted me a little.

In this Prison we lay for about four Months, where, at first we had tolerable allowance, of such as it was, for our Subsistance; but after three Months time they gave us only one Meal a Day, of Cabbage, Bread, and Water boiled together, which they call Soop. This very scanty allowance put us out of Temper, and made us resolve rather than Starve, to break Prison, and make head against the Portuguese, and get some Victuals: for Hunger will break thro' Stone Walls. The Governour understanding how we fared, told the Crusidore that we should stay in his Prison no longer, as the Castle peculiarly was; and greatly asserted our Cause, and urged we might be set at Liberty; but the Crusidore would not hearken as yet to the clearing us, tho' he was forced to remove us from the Castle, to the Prison in which our Comrades were, where after they had allowed us about an hour's converse together, they put us down into close Confinement; tho' our allowance was a small matter better than it had been.

Under all this Difficulty of Imprisonment, short allowance, and hard fare, false Witnesses, and fear lest I should still have my Life taken from me, (when I had flattered my self, that if I could but once set Foot upon a Christian shoar, I should be out of the reach of Danger) I had a great many uneasy Reflections. I thought no bodies case was so hard as mine: first to be taken by the Pirates, and threatened with Death for not Joyning with them; to be forced away, and suffer many a drubbing Bout among them for not doing as they would have me; to be in fears of Death for being among them, if we should be taken by any Superiour force; and now that I had designedly, and with Joy, made my Escape from them, to be Imprisoned and threatened with the Halter. Thought I, When can a Man be safe? He must look for Death to be found among Pirates; and Death seems as threatening, if he Escapes from them; where is the Justice of this! It seemed an exceeding hardship to me. Yet it made me Reflect, with Humility I hope, on the Justice of GOD in so Punishing of me for my Transgressions; for tho' the tender Mercies of Man seemed to be Cruelty, yet I could not but see the Mercy and Goodness of GOD to me, not only in Punishing me less than I deserved, but in preserving me under many and sore Temptations, and at length delivering me out of the Pirates hands: and I had some hope that GOD would yet appear for me, and bring me out of my distress, and set my Feet in a large place.

I thought my Case was exceedingly like that of the Psalmist; and the Meditation on some Verses in the XXXV. Psalm was a peculiar support to me: I thought I might say with him, False Witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not; they rewarded me evil for good. But as for me, when they were taken (tho' I don't remember I had ever seen the Faces of any of them then) I humbled my self, and my Prayer returned into my own bosom; I behaved my self as the they had been my friends, I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother; but in my adversity they rejoyced, and gathered themselves together against me; yea, they opened their mouth wide against me,—they gnashed upon me with their teeth, and said Aba, Aba, our eye hath seen it, -so would we have it. But Lord how long wilt thou look on? preserve my Soul from their Destruction, let not them that are mine Enemies wrongfully rejoyce over me, -stir up thy Self and awake to my Judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord, and let them not rejoyce over me-and I will give thee thanks in the great Congregation, my tongue shall speak of thy Righteousness, and thy Praise all the day long.

In the midst of all my other Calamities, after I had been in this Prison about two Months, I was taken down with the Small-Pox, and this to be sure was a very great addition to my Misery. I knew well how we dreaded this Distemper in my own Country: and thought I, how can I possibly escape with Life? To be seised with it in a Prison, where I had no Help, no Physician, nor any Provision suitable therefor; only upon my first being taken I sent word of it to the Consul, who was so kind as to send some Bundles

of Straw for me to lye upon, instead of the hard Stones which as yet had been my Lodging; and the *Portuguese* gave me some Brandy, and Wine & Water to drive out the Pock. I was exceedingly dejected, and had nothing to do but to commit my self to the Mercy of GOD, and prepare my self for Death, which seemed to have laid hold upon me; for which way soever I looked, I could see nothing but Death in such a Distemper, under such Circumstances; and I could see the *Portuguese* how they stared upon me, looked sad, and shook their heads; which told me their apprehensions, that I was a Dead Man. Yet I had this comfort, that it was better to Die thus by the hand of GOD, than to Die a vile Death by the hand of Man, as if I had been one of the worst of Malefactors.

But after all it pleased GOD in His Wonderful Goodness so to order it, that the Pock came out well, and filled kindly and then I had the comfort of seeing the *Portuguese* look more pleasant, and hearing them say, in their Language, that it was a good sort. In about five or six Days the Pock began to turn upon me, and then it made me very Sick, and at times I was something out of my Head; and having no Tender or Watcher, I got up in the Night to the Pail of Water to drink, which at another time, and in another place, would have been thought fatal to me; but GOD in infinite Mercy prevented my receiving any hurt thereby, and raised me up from this Sickness.

After I recovered of this Illness, I was but in a weak Condition for a long time, having no other Nourishment and Comfort, than what a Jayl afforded, where I still lay for near three Months longer. At length, sometime in *June*, 1723, I was taken out of Jayl, and had the Liberty of the Consul's House given me, who treated me kindly and did not suffer me to want any thing that was necessary for my Support.

While I was at Liberty, I understood there was one John Welch, an Irishman, bound to Lishon, whom I desired to carry me thither. And in the latter end of June I set Sail in him for Lishon,

where we Arrived about the middle of July, after we had been 21 Days upon the Passage. When I had got to Lisbon, being almost Naked, I apply'd my self to the Envoy, told him my Condition, and desired him to bestow some old Cloaths upon me. But he, (good Man!) said to me, that as I had Run away from the Pirates, I might go to Work for my Support, and provide my self with Cloaths as well as I could. And I found I must do so, for none would he give me. I had nothing against Working, but I should have been glad to have been put into a Working Garb; for I was sensible it would be a considerable while before I could purchase me any Cloaths, because Welch play'd me such an Irish trick, that he would not release me, unless I promised to give him the first Moidore I got by my Labour; tho' I had wrought for him all the Passage over, and he knew my poor Circumstances; however when I came to Sail for New-England, Welch was better than his Word, and forgave me the Moidore, after I had been at the Labour of unloading his Vessel.

I spent some time in Lisbon; at length I heard there was one Capt. Skillegorne bound to New-England, in whom I took my Passage home; who Clothed me for my Labour in my Passage. We touched in at Madara, and Arrived at Boston upon Wednesday, September 25, 1723. And I at my Father's House in Marblehead the Saturday after.

So has GOD been with me in six troubles, and in seven. He has suffered no evil to come nigh me. He has drawn me out of the Pit, Redeemed my Life from Destruction, and Crowned me with Loving Kindness and Tender Mercies; unto Him be the Glory for ever. Amen.

Nicholas Merritt, Jun.





# GOD's Ability to Save

His People out of all their Dangers.

## DAN. III. 17.

If it be so, our GOD, whom we Serve, is able to Deliver us from the Burning Fiery Furnace, and He will Deliver us out of thine Hand, O King.



E have before us the Remarkable History of what befel Three Young Men of the Jews, who were carryed away Captive by the Chaldeans, into Babylon. The haughty *Nebuchadnezzar* had caused an Image of wonderous Stature to be made of Gold, and passed a

severe Decree, that all Men, upon hearing the musical Instruments, which he ordered to be Sounded at certain Times, should fall down and Worship the Golden Image, upon pain of their being cast into a Fiery Furnace. The three Jewish Worthies, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, steadily adhered to the Worship of the True GOD of Israel, the GOD of their Fathers, and, in Compliance with his Commands, abhored such gross Idolatry, and therefore, notwithstanding the heavy penalty annexed to the Persian Edict, utterly refused to bow the Knee, and give any Religious Worship to the Golden Image which Nebuchadnezzar

had set up. Some of the Bigotted Chaldeans, observing that these Three Young Men neglected to comply with the King's Command, accused them to his Majesty of Contempt of his Royal Authority, and Breach of his Imperial Edict, saying, ver. 12. These Men, O King, have not regarded thee, they serve not thy gods, nor worship the Golden Image which thou hast set up. Upon which Nebuchadnezzar was kindled into Fury, to think, that any from among the poor Captives of the Jews, and these Young Men, should dare to take upon them to Govern themselves more by the Dictates of their own Minds, informed by the Law of the GOD of Israel, than by his Royal Will and Pleasure, and under the pretence of Conscience, refuse to obey his Command, which enjoyned the Religious Worship of what he accounted his god, on pain of his highest Displeasure; he immediately sends for them, and hastily, and angrily Queries with them, for their Audacious contempt of him: Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego? Do ye not serve my gods? And he assures them, that if they did not Worship his gods, they should be cast the same Hour into the midst of a burning fiery Furnace; Such a quick Riddance was he resolved to make of all that dared to Dissent from his Established Religion! And who is that God (said that haughty Monarch,) that shall deliver you out of my hands?

The three devout Young Men Answer him with a truly Heroick Spirit, and Fortitude of Mind, becoming them as Men, and as those that feared the LORD GOD of Heaven; O Nebuchadnezzar, said they, we are not careful to answer Thee in this Matter; as if they had said, Sir, we are in your hands, you may do with us what you please, we are not much concerned what outward Torment you shall inflict upon us; we are ready to suffer any Penalty, rather than renounce the True GOD, and turn to the Worshipping of Idols; we have placed our Hope and Trust in the Living JEHOVAH, and doubt not His Protection and Favour; for, as in my Text, If it be so, that is, if thou shouldst cast us into the fiery furnace, yet, our God whom we serve, is able

to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine Hand, O King; but if not (as it follows in the next verse) if our GOD do not see cause to deliver us out of the Furnace, yet (such their Faith and Trust in GOD, and Resolutions for His Service, that they could say) be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the Golden Image, which thou hast set up. Such their Resolution that they had rather undergo any Death, than wilfully Sin against GOD; and their hope and trust in Him was grounded upon his Infinite and Almighty Power to help them, and his Goodness and Mercy to them in the Conclusion, whatever they were called to suffer for his sake.

From the Words I shall observe this General Truth, viz.

DOCT. THAT GOD is able to Deliver them that Serve Him, from the Greatest of Enemies and Dangers.

What a Signal Instance have we of the Power of GOD, & his Ability & readiness to deliver them that serve him, in these three Children of the Captivity, whose Memorable Story is before us; The Answer of Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-nego, put Nebuchadnezzar into such a Rage that he could not contain himself, The Visage of his Countenance was changed, he appeared all Wrath and Fury, and that the Furnace might be like himself, and make a thorough Dispatch of them, he Commanded, that they should heat the Furnace one seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated; and lest there should be any possible way left for their Escape out of the vehemently heated Furnace, he Commanded the most Mighty Men that were in his Army, to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them, so bound in their Cloaths, into the burning fiery furnace; and so overheated was the Furnace, that those that did the Office of casting them into it were slain by the Flame of the Fire, upon their Approach only to the Verge of it; and yet after all, see the Wonderful Power and Goodness of GOD, to them that serve him, he is able to deliver, and he will deliver; for tho' those three Men fell down bound into the Furnace, yet GOD Quenched the Raging of the Fire, and suffered it not to hurt them, to the astonishment of Nebuchadnezzar, and all about him; for while he sat to glut his Eyes with the beholding how the Flame would consume those that dared to dispute his Authority, and disobey his Word, he is surprized with the amazing Spectacle, that those whom he had cast bound into the midst of the Fire, were loose, walking in the midst of the Fire, without having received any Hurt, with a Fourth Person walking among them, the form of whom was like the Son of God. Upon such an astonishing Sight Nebuchadnezzar is possessed with some Aw[e] and Dread of the GOD of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and a Veneration for their Persons; and now in Respect to them, he comes himself nearer to the Mouth of the Furnace, and calls upon them, Ye Servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither; and in the presence of all his Nobles came forth these three Men, upon whose Bodies the Fire had no power, nor was an Hair of their head singed, neither were their Coats changed, nor the smell of Fire had passed on them. The account of which we have in the latter part of the Chapter where my Text is.

A like notable instance of the Divine Power, to protect and deliver the Servents of GOD, we have in *Daniel*, another of the Children of the Captivity; the History of which we have in the VIth Chapter of *Daniel*.

Darius, the Emperor of Persia and Media, had set 120 Princes over his Kingdom, at the Head of whom he had placed Three Presidents, and made Daniel, a Jewish Captive, Chief among them; which greatly excited the Indignation and Envy of the several Princes, to see a Captive preferred before them; insomuch that they entered into a Combination to take him off; but knowing the King's fondness for him, they saw it would be in vain for them to attempt to remove him out of the way by their own power, and therefore they more Politickly covered their malicious

designs, & narrowly watched all his motions, that if possible, they might find somewhat whereof to accuse him to the King, of want of Fidelity, or Male-Administration: After a long Time of envious Observation, they find Daniel preserved a steady Allegiance to his Sovereign, and Prudently managed the Affairs of Government committed to his Trust, so that there was no hopes of their picking any matter of Just Accusation out of so wise and faithful a Servant; and therefore they have recourse to a Stratagem which they doubted not would succeed to their Wish. They remembred, that tho' Daniel was thus advanced in the Persian Court, yet he was Born and Educated in the Jews Religion, and was still a strict worshiper of the GOD of Israel. This they were resolved to improve against him; and therefore, under the fair pretence of doing a great Honour to their Sovereign, a Bill is brought in, and passes among them, That whoever shall ask a Petition of any GOD, or man, for thirty days, save of King Darius, should be cast into the Den of Lyons: this they bring to the King, and pray his signing of it, that it may pass into a firm Decree, according to the Law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not: The King was easily taken with the Flattery, and readily Signs the Bill. And now they thought themselves sure of the Prey; and should have this pleasure added to their Revenges, to see their Royal Master, who so highly Honoured Daniel, as hastily pull him down and destroy him. They had not waited long before they find Daniel according to his daily custom, upon his Knees, Praying and giving thanks to the GOD of Heaven, notwithstanding the Established Decree; and now they run hastily to the King, and mind him of the Decree, and inform him that his favourite Daniel despised his Authority, and contemned his Edict, and dared, notwithstanding the severity of it, to make his Petition three times a day. The King now saw himself caught in the Snare, and his Faithful Servant Daniel likely to perish, and therefore in great concern for him he laboured till the going down of the Sun, to deliver him from their Rage, but all in vain; so

weak is the power of Earthly Monarchs; for the envious Courtiers are but so much the more enraged, the more the King pleaded to save him, and growing Mad and Insolent, say to him, Know, O King, that the Law of the Medes and Persians is, that no Decree nor Statute, which the King Establisheth, may be changed; and thus at length they extort from their Sovereign a Command, against his will, that Daniel should be cast into the Den of Lions. And yet see how wonderously GOD delivered him. The King, who had passed the Night without Sleep, in a Melancholy Reflection upon the Loss of so valuable a Servant, came very early the next Morning to the Den, and cryed out, O Daniel, Servant of the Living God! is thy God, whom thou serveth continually, able to deliver thee from the Lions? Then Daniel Answered the King, and said, O King live for ever; My God hath sent his Angels, and hath shut the Lions Mouths, that they have not hurt me: so Daniel was taken up out of the Den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

In these Instances has GOD made his power to be known, that he is able to deliver those that fear him; & so great an Enemy as Nebuchadnezzar, and so terrible a danger as a sevenfold heated Furnace, could not prevent the deliverance of the Three Children; nor so many potent adversaries as the Princes of Persia, and the Law in Conjunction with them, and so horrid a Danger as a Den of Hungry Lions, could not make a Prey of Daniel, but GOD could, and did deliver those his Servants out of the Hands of them all.

I will only a little further Illustrate and Confirm the Doctrinal Truth, by mentioning a few things briefly, and then pass into the Improvement.

1. All Power belongeth unto GOD, so that he is able to do whatsoever he pleaseth. To GOD belongs the Power of Right and Authority to Rule and Govern his Creatures and all their Actions; for they are all the Workmanship of his Hands. He is the great Creator, and therefore the most high Possessor, or Lord Pro-

prietor of Heaven, and of Earth. Psal. XCV. 3,4,5. The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods; in his hands are the deep places of the Earth, the strength of the Hills is his also; the Sea is his, and the reason is, he made it, and his hands formed the dry Land.

But then GOD has an Infinity of power or strength to perform his Pleasure. Men may have a Right to Rule, and yet may want strength to defend themselves from a successful Invasion upon their Right, by a bold and more potent Usurper. But GOD has all power in his own Hands, so that he is able to defend himself against the united Force of all Creatures, and to accomplish his pleasure against all possible opposition; Hence we read, Job IX. 19. If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong, & ver. 4. He is mighty in strength. So that whatever GOD Wills to do, that he is able to do; that is to say, all that is possible to be done, and that not only by means and Instruments, but by Almighty Power. When therefore at any time we read in the Scripture, that GOD cannot do so, or so, it does not intend that there is any want of any, the least possible measure or degree of Power in GOD, but it means that the thing itself is Impossible to be done; and that either from Contradictoriness of the Nature of things, as a thing cannot be True, and False, at the same time, and in the same respect; or from the Contradictoriness of things to the Nature and perfections of GOD. Hence 'tis said, that it is Impossible for GOD to lie, because this is contrary to the perfections of his Nature: But all that comes within the verge of a possibility, and that not to finite, but to infinite Power, that GOD is able to perform, for he is the Lord Almighty; and can any thing be too hard for the Almighty? How then would he be Almighty? Tho' it be true, that GOD may not, or rather will not, do all that is possible to be done, yet the Reason of this is to be fetched from his own Sovereign Will and Pleasure, which is uncontrolable by any thing out of himself; for whatsoever he willeth to do, he has Power sufficient to enable him to execute his purpose. So that the

Power and Ability of GOD is Infinite, nor can anything set Limits thereto but his own Will; hence he says, *Isa.* XLVI. 10. My Counsel shall stand, I will do all my Pleasure.

2. Hence, GOD is able to over-rule all the Enemies of his Servants, and prevent the dangers that threaten them. For seeing the Power of GOD is Infinite, it is consequently Extensive over all things; the Hosts of Heaven, Earth and Sea are at his Command, and he is an overmatch for their united Strength. This Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges, when he saw how wonderfully GOD had delivered the Three Children out of his hands, and from the violence of the Fire, Dan.III.29. I make a Decree, says he, that every people, and nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a Dunghill, because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

Yea, GOD has the Hearts, as well as the Hands of all Men under his Government, and can turn them as he pleases; Pro. XXI.1. The King's Heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water, he turneth it whithersoever he will. GOD has the Hearts of the Greatest and Mightiest of Men in his Custody, they are at his disposal, he Governs them by his Power, and can turn them at his Pleasure; so that when they set themselves to do Mischief unto his Servants, he can lay Restraints upon their Lusts and Passions; when they are full of Malice and Rage, he can prevent their Malice, and extinguish their Rage, and make them to shew Acts of Kindness, instead of doing hurt to them that serve him. Thus when Esau came forth with an Armed Band against Jacob, (most probably with intentions to wreak his Revenges upon him) yet how soon did GOD over-rule him, that of an Enemy he became a Friend, and instead of hurting, offers, either with his whole Band to Conduct him, that no Adversary might annoy him, or at least to leave some of his Forces with him, to assist him in driving his Cattle, and in the carrying of his little ones and Goods. See Gen. Chap. XXXII and XXXIII.

Thus GOD is able to stay the hands of their Enemies, when they are lifted up to smite them, or can wither them in a Moment. When a *Pharaoh* is set upon afflicting and vexing his People, and will not let them go to serve him, he is able to send his Plagues upon such an implacable Enemy, till he is glad to get ride of them, and hurry them away to the Service of their GOD: If he pursue after them with his Armed Forces, purposing in his Rage to cut them off Root and Branch; all his Mighty Power, with utmost seeming advantages attending them, shall not be able to hurt them: for GOD is able to knock off his Chariot Wheels, and stop him in his Course; he is able to bring the Waters of the Sea, which parted, and stood up as a Wall for the safe Passage of his Israel, over *Pharaoh* and his Egyptians, and destroy them all in a Moment.

Thus GOD is able to over-rule the Dangers that threaten his Servants. Tho' threatning dangers may be contingent to us and we are not able to foresee and provide against them, yet GOD has the absolute Command of all Contingencies; they are all known unto him, and by his Power he Rules and Governs them as he pleases; or if the Dangers that threaten are the natural result of Second causes, and we see them a coming, but can discern no possible way of escaping them, yet GOD can over-rule Second causes, he can stop their motions and operations, suspend their influences and vigour, as he quenched the Raging of the Fire, and Stopped the Mouths of Lions; or he can give quite another turn to them; he can cause the Sun to go Backward, as well as to stand still on Gibeon, & by one or other is able to deliver them that serve him.

3. GOD is able to Establish and fulfil his purpose, against all the counsels and purposes of Men. For the Lord Almighty has none to stand in competition with him, to equal and rival him in Power and Dominion; and therefore tho' the Enemies of his People look never so big, and swell never so much with Envy and Rage, though they enter into Combination and take Counsel together,

project their Schemes never so nicely, & lay their Plots never so deep, yet all signifies nothing before the Arm of the Mighty GOD of Jacob; for he is able to Counterwork their designs; as he can spie out the hidden works of Darkness, and discover the, otherwise inscrutable, Devices in the Heart of Man, so he is able to frustrate them, and bring them all to nought; He can take the Crafty in their own Craftiness, and make them that seek the hurt of his People to fall into the Pit which they have digged for them: The Counsel of the Lord that shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations, Psal.XXXIII.11. And hence also the Wife Man tells us, Prov. XIX.21. There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the Counsel of the Lord that shall stand. In vain do any attempt to set themselves against the purposes of GOD; never any hardened himself against GOD and prospered. Who is that GOD, that shall deliver out of my hands? said haughty Nebuchadnezzar; Vain Man! how weak are thy purposes, when the Almighty meaneth not so? Tho' he resolved to consume the three Worthies in the seven-fold heated fiery Furnace, shall his Counsel stand? No; the Lord of Hosts gives forth his Word, and the Fire loseth its Power to hurt, and his Servants are delivered; our GOD is able to deliver us. This Nebuchadnezzar himself is forced to acknowledge, Dan.IV. 34,35. The most High, whose dominion is an ever-lasting dominion, He doth according to his will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest Thou? And thus Darius confesseth to the Glory of God, after Daniel's Escape from the Lions Den, Dan. VI. 26, 27. He is the Living God, and stedfast for ever, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed-He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in Heaven, and in Earth. In short, GOD is Irresistible in his Counsels and Designs, and there is no controuling him in his Way: if he will work, who shall let him; None ever succeeded in any mischievous intention to destroy any one Servant of GOD, when he meant to deliver him.

- 4. 'Tis easy with GOD to deliver his Servants from Enemies and Dangers. Those things that are hard and difficult to the united Force of all Creatures, are light and easy with GOD; yea, that which is impossible to Creatures, as exceeding the utmost reach of their power and strength, is no ways hard and difficult to the Almighty: as the Angel said to Abraham, Gen. XVIII. 14. Is any thing too hard for the Lord! He is the Lord Almighty, and can any thing be too hard for Almighty Power? It may be too hard for finite limited power, but it can't be too hard for Almighty power to deliver them that serve GOD, out of the extremest dangers, and from the most potent Enemies. It was easy with GOD to create a World out of Nothing, he did but speak the Word, let there be such a World, so and so Modified, Adorned and Inhabited, and his Word is obeyed immediately: And how easy then is it with that GOD to whom Creating Power belongs, to work Deliverance for his People?
- 1. How easily can GOD find out the proper methods to deliver his Servants! Tho; the Circumstances of their Distress may be so peculiarly intricate and perplexed, and the Crafty Devices of their Enemies so hidden and encreased, that they can see no possible way of their Escaping, yet GOD can easily find out an unthought of Method, and in an untrodden path, which no Vultur's Eye hath discovered, come and Save them. When the Children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, combined against Judah in the Days of Jehoshaphat, the weak powers of Judah were no ways sufficient to Cope with the Superior Force of their Enemies, nor could they devise any Politick Method, any Slight or Stratagem, by which they could hope to Escape the Destruction that threatned them: We have no might against this great Company, that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, say they; so that they could see no possibility of Escaping, seeing they had neither Power to withstand them, nor Art and Skill to evade the coming Blow; and yet, when their Eyes are to the Lord, and their hope and trust is placed in him, how easily does GOD find out a new and

unthought of Method for their Deliverance, by setting their Adversaries at variance among themselves, till in the heat and fury of their Jealousy and Rage they had devoured one another, and left a rich and unguarded Camp an easy Prey to the Men of Judah. The History of which we have in the second of Chronicles, Chap. XX. And thus, when Haman was Maliciously bent to Revenge the Affront he thought he had received from Mordecai, not only upon him Personally, but all his Nation and People with him, and had made the Slaughter of the Jews sure, as one would have been ready to think, by the Royal Edict devoting them to Destruction; what possible way was there left (humanely speaking) for this Poor, Captivated, Despised People, to Escape the universal Desolation that was hastening upon them? and yet how wonderfully and unexpectedly did GOD find out a way, in the very nick of Time, to involve Haman and his ten Sons in the Destruction designed for Mordecai, and those that confederated with him against the Jews, in the same Ruin that was designed for them, while Mordecai and his People Escaped. See the History of it in the Book of Esther. Thus GOD can make the Stars to fight in their Courses, against his Peoples Enemies, and the Ordinances of Heaven to contribute to the Deliverance of his Servants.

2. How easy is it with GOD to work Deliverance for his Servants, against, or without Means and Instruments! Though GOD usually worketh by Means, yet he can go out of the ordinary course of his Providence, & work contrary to them, or without them, as he pleases. GOD can go against the ordinary course of Nature, or the natural operation of Second Causes, to fulfil his designs, and bring about his purposes. He that at first put those Virtues and Powers into Second Causes, which they are endowed withal, can easily Strip them of their Efficacy, or put a new vigour and strength into them, which they naturally have not. How did he make the voracious Raven to part with his Food for the Support of his Servant Elijah? I Kings XVII. 4. How did he cause the

Walls of Jericho to fall down at the Blast of Rams-Horns? Jos.VI.20. He is able to accomplish Deliverance for his Servants, when there are no means used, none that have a natural operation to bring about such an end: He can stretch forth his Arm, and is able by the strength of his own Right Hand, to pluck them as Brands out of the Burning, and rescue them out of the hands of them that hate them: He need but speak the word, and it shall be done. The Iron Gate will fly open of its own accord, at the Command of GOD, to grant a deliverance to his Servant Peter out of Prison, Act. XII.10. These things sufficiently Illustrate and Confirm this Truth, that GOD is able to Deliver them that Serve Him.

I proceed to make some Improvement of what has been said.

I. Is GOD able to Deliver them that Serve him? How terrible must the Thoughts of this be, to those that are at Enmity against GOD and his People. Every wilful Sinner is an Enemy to GOD; Rom. VIII. 7. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God. The Carnal mind discovers its Enmity against GOD, in its want of Subjection to his Law, which is Holy, Just & Good. Now, as GOD is able to deliver them that serve him out of the hands of their Enemies, be they never so many and great, so he is able to inflict the deserved Punishment, upon all that are in a State of Enmity against him; how truly terrible must it then needs be to the Guilty Sinner, to think seriously of the Almighty Power of GOD; well may it make his Flesh tremble, and his Heart to melt in the midst of his Bowels, to think what an Enemy he hath stirred up, and what an avenger is in pursuit after him. For tho' he now mocks at Fear, and laughs at the sound of the threatning, tho' he rusheth on as into the Battle against the Almighty, trampling upon the Authority, and violating the Laws of GOD, yet let him know, and be assured of it, that he does but run upon the thick bosses of the Buckler of the Almighty, to his own utter Ruin and Confusion; for all his

Efforts shall not be able to weaken the Divine Arm, nor his Collected Strength to stay the Hand of the most High, when it is lifted up to smite him. Earthly Monarchs may want power to Punish a bold Offender, and a Combination of Rebels may be too strong for them; a David may complain, These sons of Zerviah are too hard for me; but GOD cannot want Power to Punish the greatest and most daring Sinner, nor can the Combination of all the Wicked of the Earth prevail against him. As he shews himself strong on the behalf of those whose Hearts are perfect towards him, to accomplish deliverance for them, so he will make his power to be known on the Vessels of his Wrath, in the Day when he shall arise to Execute Vengeance upon the Wicked, and Punishment upon the People that disobey his Laws. How Miserable then must the Condition of the Wicked of the Earth be, who have this strong and all powerful GOD for their Enemy; for it is utterly Impossible for them to Escape, in the Day when he will Execute his Wrath upon them, and pour out his Anger like Fire: There is none can deliver out of his hand, Job.X.

7. When a Nebuchadnezzar shall cast a Servant of GOD into a Fiery Furnace, he may vauntingly say, Who is that God that shall deliver out of my hands? and yet our GOD is able to deliver them that serve him, from his Rage and Cruelty; but when GOD himself shall cast the Wicked of the Earth into Hell, most intensly heated by his fierce Indignation and Wrath, and where the Flame is inextinguishable, there is none in Earth or Heaven, that shall be able to deliver out of his hands. O what are poor Potsherds of the Earth, Worms of the Dust, that they should vainly imagine, that they can stand it out against that GOD, who sitteth on the Circle of the Heavens, and before whom, all Nations are but as Grasshoppers! GOD will make them to feel the Effects of his Power and Wrath in Hell, who will go on in contempt of him and his Laws. And this will make Hell to be most terrible, that there is the Wrath of an Almighty, which burns with most amazing fierceness, accompanyed with Infinite

Strength and Power to hold the Guilty Creature in endless durance, and fix him irrevocably in the place of Torment beyond a possibility of Escaping. Wrath without Power might possibly be evaded, but where there is an Infinity of Power in conjunction with inexpressible Wrath, how unavoidable is the Punishment? how exquisite and interminable must the Misery needs be? Verily, 'Tis a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God!

And I might add; this Doctrine looks terribly upon the Enemies of GOD's Servants; they that hate them, and persecute them for Righteousness sake, would do well to consider that the GOD that is able to deliver his Servants, is able also to avenge their Blood, and retaliate all the mischief and spite of their Adversaries; he can lift up himself, as Judge of the Earth, and render a reward unto the Proud, and great Reason have they to fear that he will do so. But I pass to say, [sic]

- 2. This Doctrine may serve to teach us, that we should not fear Man, but GOD. For if GOD is able to deliver them that serve him out of the hands of the most powerful Enemies, then there is but little reason why we should fear Man, who if GOD please, shall not be able to do us the least hurt, but there is all imaginable reason for us to fear GOD, lest he should become our Enemy, and give us up to the will of those that plot Mischief against us.
- 1. This teaches us not to Fear Man. I do not mean, that we should not maintain such a cautionary fear of Man, as shall put us upon our guard, lest we give any just occasion of Offence to any, and such a reverential fear of Man as shall excite us to pay the civil Honours and Respects that are due to every one in their several Stations and Relations; but that we ought not so to fear Man, as from the Apprehensions of what they may do to us, to be influenced to anything that is contrary to the known Laws of GOD. For the Will & power of Man is limited, and bounded by the Infinitely Superior Will and Power of GOD, who brings Princes to nothing, and maketh the Judges of the Earth Vanity.

Cease then from Man, for how unreasonable is it that he should be feared, whose Breath is in his Nostrils, his Breath goeth forth, he Dieth, and that very Day all his Thoughts Perish: all his Thoughts of Evil against us, cease with his Breath, and what Hurt then can he do unto us! Surely, no fear of Man should move us at any time to neglect a known Duty, but we should still attend our Duty, let who will threaten, and leave it with GOD to preserve us: Daniel did so. Nor should any fear of Man drive us to do, a Sinful action, but we should resolve with our selves not to comply with the desire or Command of any to commit Sin, tho' it should be enforced upon us with the heaviest Temporal Penalty; The Three Children did so. For tho' Men may threaten us, what they will do unto us, yet they are not able to accomplish their threatning, but our GOD can quench the Fire of the Furnace, and the Fire of the Pistol levelled at our Heads or Breasts; he can turn away the Sword from us, can stay the Hand that is lifted up to smite us, and wither the Arm in a Moment that seems resolved to destroy, if we will not do such or such a wicked thing: Why then should we fear what Man can do unto us! Hence said GOD by his Prophet, Isa.LI.12,13. Who are thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a Man that shall die, and of the son of man, which shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the Earth; and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor? How should this Thought arm our Seafaring Brethren and Neighbours particularly, with Resolutions not to fear Man, if at any time they fall into the hands of the Sons of Violence, who not only entice, but threaten a present Death, in case of a Refusal to comply with them in their Impious and unrighteous wayes? you have seen that our GOD is able to deliver.

2. This should teach us to fear GOD. If GOD be able to deliver his Servants, then we should fear the Lord and his Good-

ness, that when we are endangered, we may experience his kind Protection. He is as able to Kill and Destroy, as to Deliver and Save alive, and therefore should we fear him; yea, he is able to destroy not only our Bodies, but our Souls too in Hell for ever: How greatly then is he to be feared? Thus our Saviour argues, Mat.X.28. Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell. The Lord is a great GOD, and a great King above all gods, his Name is Dreadful; he can give a Commission to, and arm the least of his Creatures to hurt and destroy us; he has innumerable Ways to destroy, as well as to deliver; and the same Mighty Power that can preserve us, can also bring us to the Dust of the Earth; therefore should we stand in awe of him, and not Sin. Hence says the Prophet Jer. X, 6.7. For asmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy Name is great in might, who will not fear thee, O King of Nations? for to thee doth it appertain. And thus we find Darius, after the signal Deliverance wrought for Daniel, issuing his Royal Proclamation in such Terms, Dan. VI. 26. I make a Decree, that in every Dominion of my Kingdom, Men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for he is the Living God, and stedfast for ever.

But,

3. This teaches us to put our trust in GOD. Our GOD is able to deliver: To whom then should we repair for shelter in an Evil Day, but unto the Lord our GOD, whose Name is a strong Tower whereunto the Righteous run and are safe! The Ability of GOD to help us is the foundation of our trust: Isa.XXVI.3. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. The Power of GOD should encourage us to trust in him at all times, in all our straits and difficulties; He is able to supply all our wants for us, therefore should we not doubt his Power, or say with incredulous Israel of Old, Can the Lord spread a Table for us in the Wilderness? can he give us Bread and Flesh to Eat? But we should make known our wants to him, and leave it

with him to carve out for us what portion of these things he pleases. He is able to deliver us from our Fears, therefore at what time we are afraid, we should place our trust in him, and recall our fainting Spirits in the language of the Psalmist, Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? hope thou in God. He is able to bring us out of all our Distresses, therefore let our case look never so desperate, we should guard against all Despondency, and all Sinful Compliances with the Enticements of Wicked Men, and cast our Burden upon the Lord, who is a present help in times of trouble. Thus say the three Children, He is able—and he will deliver us; such is their Confidence, Hope, and Trust in GOD. And we should learn to trust in GOD, when we have only his Almighty Power to rely upon; I mean, when we can see no likely humane Methods to procure us what we want, or work Deliverance for us. What possible ground for hope and trust, had the three Children from Men and means, when cast into the Fiery Furnace? Where could they look among all the Creatures of GOD, and see the least glimmerings of hope to Escape the Violence of the Flame? But when all hope and help fails us from the Creature, yet still we have the Infinite Power of GOD to betake our selves to, he is then able to Save us, and bestow the Blessing upon us. Thus to have our hope and trust placed in GOD, as able to deliver and help us, will be the most likely way to preserve the inward Peace of our own Minds, and make us all Calm & Sedate within, when all things without us are thrown into Tempest and Confusion; For Happy is he, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that therein is; (Psal.CXLVI. I.) He will keep him in perfect Peace, whose Mind is stayed on him, because he trusteth in him. Isa. XXVI. 3.

4. This should teach us to become the true Servants of GOD. Our GOD, whom we serve, is able to deliver us, say they, But if we are not the Sincere Servants of GOD, we can have no good grounds to hope that he will make bare his Arm, and shew us his Salvation. For GOD is Angry with the Wicked every

Day, and those that walk in disobedience to him, and trample upon his Laws, have reason to fear lest his Power should be manifested in inflicting very heavy Judgments upon them, and the worst that they feel in this Life, be but the beginning of Sorrows to them: but the Lord taketh pleasure in the prosperity of his Servants, and is ready to gird himself with Strength, and come and save them. This Consideration then, should excite us to become the Sincere and Faithful Servants of the most high GOD; this should put us all upon a Serious Devoting of our selves to his Service, and a fixed Resolution to employ all our powers for him, that we may glorify him with our Bodies and our Spirits, which are the Lord's; This should make us exceeding careful to approve and do the good, perfect, acceptable Will of GOD, that we may walk in all Well-pleasing before him; this should make us to delight ourselves in his Law, to esteem his Precepts concerning all things to be right, and to hate every false way; This should make us frequent, earnest, and importunate in our Prayers to GOD, that we may honour him, in an acknowledgment of our dependance upon him; This should make us diligent, serious, & devout in our attendance upon the Publick Duties of Religion in the House and Ordinances of our GOD; This should put us upon a hearty and unreserved dedication of our selves to GOD in Christ Jesus, choosing this GOD for our GOD, this Redeemer for our Saviour, upon his own terms, and in his own way; this should make us ready to lay our selves out in the Service of Christ, being willing to spend and be spent for him, and to do all we can for the Honour of the Name of Christ, and the Interest of his Kingdom in the World; Yea, this should make us willing to suffer any thing, to undergo any hardships, to be exposed to any Death, rather than to Sin against GOD. Thus should we become the true Servants of GOD, and then may we quietly hope, and patiently wait for the Salvation of GOD.

Lastly. Has GOD at any time granted Deliverance to us, Let us then give unto the Lord the Glory. All our deliverances of

every kind come from GOD, who is the GOD of Salvation; and therefore unto him should we ascribe the Glory. Thus has GOD wrought deliverance for us, when in a time of Sickness, he has preserved us from the Noisome Pestilence, or raised us up when we were brought low? Has GOD delivered us from Shipwrack in times of Storm and Tempest, and stilled the Proud Waves of the Sea for us, and brought us to our desired Haven! Has he preserved us from falling a Prey into the hands of Barbarous Enemies, when we have been greatly endangered by them, or delivered us from Captivity to them that hated us! and especially, has he rescued any of us from the hands of Pirates, those Evil and Bloody Men, where our Life has hung continually in doubt, and the Snares of Death have compassed us, and our better Interest has been in the utmost danger of being lost for ever? Upon all such deliverances let us call upon our Souls, and all that is within us, to Bless his Holy Name. See then the hand of GOD in accomplishing all for us, acknowledge and praise his Power and Goodness to us in all; Let our glad Hearts adore him, while with our Lips we speak well of his Name, and in our Lives we endeavour to make returns, answerable to the Benefits we have received; and carefully pay our Vows to the Lord, which our Mouth hath uttered, or Heart purposed in the Day of our Distress. Thus we find Jonah after his signal Deliverance, as from the Belly of Hell, saying Jonah II.9 I will Sacrifice unto thee, with the voice of Thanksgiving, I will pay that that I have vowed; Salvation is of the Lord.

And now suffer me to Address my Self particularly to that Young Man, who is here before the Lord this Day our Wonder, and our Joy.

### My Dear Child!

We stand amazed at what GOD has done for you, and receive you as a Monument of the Divine Power, and a Miracle of Mercy. We are lost in the Meditation on the Wonders and

Triumphs of the Power and Goodness of GOD to you! In You we see, that our GOD whom we Serve, is able to deliver out of the Fiery Furnace & from the Den of Lions! In You we see, that nothing is too hard for the Lord & that 'tis not in vain for us to call upon him! In You we see, that there is room for us to trust to the Arm of the Strong GOD to help us, when there is not the least rational prospect from the Creature! In You we see, that 'tis safest running the risque of incurring the utmost Rage and Fury of Men, by denying all Sinful Compliances with them, rather than to provoke GOD, by joining with them in their pernicious Ways!

We cannot but hope, that there were some dispositions in You to Serve GOD, before you were carried away Captive by a Crew of *Pirates*, almost Three Years ago; and allow me to say, Basely ingrateful, and deeply Guilty, beyond almost any Man in the World, will You be, if now you do not become one of the most Humble, Holy, Faithful, Active Servants of GOD. To you therefore let my Counsel be acceptable this Day.

1. Seriously Reflect upon the Wonders that GOD has wrought for you. Often call to mind the amazing Instances of the Goodness and Power of GOD, which you have had experience of while you have been a Captive and an Anchorite: and as you call them to mind, and have opportunity, Pen them down, that you may always have them by you, your Monitor, and your Encouragement.

#### Particularly,

1. Think what GOD has Delivered you from. Think what Society you are freed from, such as you and we justly esteem the worst of Men upon all accounts; Men of a fierce Countenance and Temper, full of Malice, Rage and Blood, with whom the almost constant Noisy Revelings, and Perpetual Din of Madness, banished every Social Vertue, and rendered you Confined to a Herd of Wild Beasts; among whom also, the prodigious De-

fiances of Heaven, and Amazing Assurances of their own Damnation, (were it not that I might add Drunkenness to their other Vices) gave you the liveliest Picture of Hell, and rendered your Companions no better than Devils incarnate.

Think also, how many have been the Deaths you have Escaped; You have been in Perils by Water, in Perils by Land, and in Deaths oft; more, it may be, than your preserved Friend, whom we received with Joy sometime ago. Think, how GOD preserved you, by Restraining the Bloody Men from laying Violent hands upon you, when you so often Refused to Join with them in their Evil Courses; how you Escaped being taken a Second time and suffering Death, by your being Providentially removed a little distance from such as had been your Companions for a while; how GOD delivered you when you were as a Mark set up to shoot at, and tho' the Bullets flew thick around you, yet none of them were suffered to harm you! how you have Escaped the dangers that threatened you from the venemous Beasts of the Land, and the devouring Monsters of the Sea.

Call to mind the signal care of GOD manifested to you, while you were alone in a desolate uninhabited Island for about Nine Months together; and that when you were just ready to Perish under your Weakness and Wounds, and the great Rains of the approaching Winter, how Marvellously did GOD send a Man to you, as it were an Angel from Heaven, to help you in your extremity to Firing, and some other necessaries of Life which you were destitute of; and by which means you were better able to shift for a Living for near Seven Months after, when you were again alone; and after that unexpected Company came to take up their Abode with you, what Civilities GOD moved them to shew to you.

2. Think upon the Manner of your Deliverance. The Manner of your Deliverance has been filled with Wonderful Interpositions of Divine Providence, and you may plainly see, that nothing short of the Arm of GOD, which alone doth marvellous things

without Number, has wrought Salvation for you. Whence else is it, that the Fire of the Pistol, levelled at your Head, should be three times going extinguished, but readily enough kindled into a discharge, when the fourth time its aim was directed from you.

How Strangely were matters over-ruled, for your first going ashoar? when the Chieftain of that Mad Crew, you were among, had so often Swore you should never go till he did; his Revellings on shoar proves the means of your Escape.

And when you had taken a small Tour, from the more constant Place of your Residence, with two or three of those Companions that had lately come to you, to another Island, at a small distance off, what a sheltering of you was this from the Fury of unreasonable Men, who would undoubtedly have destroyed you, at the same time they took the Residue of your Companions.

And at Last, what a plain Interposition of Providence was it; that by a Mighty, and Contrary Wind, those Vessels should be driven near to your Desolate Habitation, and by the want of Water be put upon sending into your Harbour, in which you had an opportunity of Returning from your Captivity and Banishment, to your Native Land. Truly 'tis the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in our Eyes.

2. And now pay your Acknowledgments to GOD, by speaking and living to his Praise. Surely you ought to speak well of the Name of GOD, and Praise his Power; tell of all his Wonders which you have seen, utter the Memory of his great Goodness, and Sing his Praise. Let nothing ever proceed out of your Lips that shall cast the least dishonour upon the Name of GOD, but Remember Nebuchadnezzar's Decree, after the Deliverance of the three Children, Dan.III.29. I make a Decree, says he, that every People, Nation and Language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, &c. shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; so spake natural Conscience; and in it you see what they deserve, that Blaspheme the Name of GOD.

GOD has preserved your Soul in Life, by his kind Visitation, now give him the Praise by Living to his Glory. We doubt not you have often called upon the Name of the Lord, (we also have lifted up our Cry to GOD on your behalf) the Lord hath heard the voice of your Supplication, your groaning hath come up before him, and he hath sent forth his word, and drawn you out of the Pit, and Redeemed you from the hand of your Enemies, and from a strange Land, and turned your Captivity, as the Streams of the South, to the unexpected Refreshment of the weary Soul; and now it becomes you to Live a Life of Thankfulness, in a grateful obedience to all the Commands of GOD, respecting your Maker, and your Fellow-Creatures; that by exercising your self always to have a Conscience void of Offence both towards GOD, and towards Man you may shew forth a lively Instance of the Grace of GOD, as well as be a Monument of his Power; that Praise may redown unto the Name of GOD, in the Churches, by the Thanksgiving of many on your behalf.

Wherefore Watch against all Sin, even the least, and those especially which Your Age and Company may most of all addict you to, and be not drawn away by the Evil Example, and enticements of others.

Take the Word of GOD for the Rule of your Walk, and let it be your Care daily to Read it, Seriously to meditate on it, and govern your self in your whole deportment by it, that ordering your Steps according to that Word, your way may be cleansed, your path may be shining, & your walk pleasant.

Let the Deliverance of your Body, lead you to Jesus Christ, to perfect Redemption for your Soul; see your self in an undone miserable State and Condition while a Stranger to Him, and a Captive to Sin, Satan and the World; and earnestly cry to him for help, and Subject your self to him, according to the Laws of the Gospel, casting your Soul upon him, relying upon him alone for Righteousness and Salvation, and following of him in the

Regeneration; and by a holy Life let all Men see, that you are truly his Servant who hath loosed your Bonds.

While you were alone for so many Months, you had a long and peculiar time to Converse with GOD, and your own Soul, and every Day was a Sabbath to you, wherein your thoughts were chiefly Restrained to GOD, and Nature; let it now be your care to maintain an Holy walk with GOD, in your Daily Converse with him in the Duties of Religion, and Devoutly Sanctify the Lord's Day, as a special Day of Rest and Rejoycing to you, both upon a Spiritual and Temporal account. I will only further commend to you two or three Texts of Scripture for your Serious Consideration, viz. Prov.XIII.20. He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a Companion of Fools shall be destroyed. Another Text is that, Psal. CXVI.12, 13, 14. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me? I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord; I will pay my Vows unto the Lord-The last I shall mind you of is that, Ezra.IX. 13,14. After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, seeing thou our God hast given us such Deliverance as this; should we again break thy commandments, -wouldst thou not be angry with us, till thou hast consumed us, so that there should be no remnant or Escaping?

And O Joyful Parents! (who have been in Anguish of Spirit for this your Son, and have Travelled in Pain a Second time for him, Mourning in Bitterness of your Souls, because this your Joseph was not) behold the Lord hath looked upon you, he hath considered your Affliction, and turned again his Captivity, Surprizing you with the unexpected, but Joyful Acclamation, that this your Son, which was Dead, is alive, he was lost, but is found. How were you like them that Dream; when the Evening before the last Lord's Day he unexpectedly came upon you, and brought the Welcome Tidings of his safety, and his Arrival among you. And shall not you also endeavour a more Holy, Watchful, Fruitful Life and Conversation? Sure I am, GOD expects it from you. Well then, carefully render unto the Lord answerable to

the distinguishing Benefits you have Received from him; and unite in that Doxology, Eph.III.20,21. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all Ages, World without end. AMEN!



## NOTES

- 1. Port Roseway, near present-day Shelburne, Nova Scotia.
- 2. In early times the Marblehead fishing fleet was wont to observe the Lord's Day, foregoing all work, other than routine shipboard duties. In many instances it was the skipper of the vessel who ordered this respite, a decision directly traceable to his piousness and deep-seated religious convictions. On the other hand, the less reverent never overlooked an opportunity to take things easy on the Sabbath. To a man these more secular-minded fishermen believed that any crew that had fished the Banks from sunup to sundown for a period of six or eight weeks was entitled to at least one day of rest in every seven.

Within the twenty-four hour stretch granted the crew, some would wile away the hours resting, others would devote their time to mending their clothes, airing wet and musty bedding, mending gear and performing a score of other personal chores. Though the break was brief, it afforded everyone a chance to wipe out the memory of the cold raw winds, the sting of brine and the miserable hours they had spent beheading, gutting and salting down their catch. Ashton's reference to the Sabbath indicates the *Milton* was a "Sunday keeper" and that Ashton himself was a

man of piety.

- 3. The Milton's crew was not uncommonly small. As a rule Marblehead fishing vessels were manned by six or eight hands, often including one or two apprentices. The "boy" mentioned by Ashton was undoubtedly an apprentice and not more than ten or twelve years of age, although lads as young as eight are known to have sailed to the Grand Banks to learn the trade and to earn money to contribute to the support of a large and impoverished family. The compensation these youngsters received in return for the hard work and drudgery that would be their lot on the fishing grounds was the sum obtained for the fish they themselves caught. To distinguish their catch from the catch of the regular crew, an apprentice would cut a small piece from the tail of each fish he decked, Dubbed "cuttails" by the sharesmen, they would work for four years before granted a promotion. Following his apprenticeship a "cuttail" would be promoted. Over a period of years he would learn the art of handlining, be taught how to behead cod and haddock, to become a "splitter," a "salter" and if found quick to learn the ropes, win a berth as "Skipper," a designation applied to the master of a fishing vessel, as distinguished from the "Captain" of a merchant ship. Since Philip Ashton, Jr., was twenty years of age and in command of the Milton at the time she was seized, it is obvious that he was both able and experienced.
- 4. Nicholas Merritt, the son of Nicholas and Elizabeth Merritt, was born in Marblehead and baptized March 29, 1702, in the First (Old North) Congregational Church, Marblehead, Massachusetts.

5. Low had obtained his brigantine in a most curious manner. Named Rebecca, she had been taken by the freebooter George Lowther on May 28, 1722, sailing in Happy Delivery, a vessel seized by him and his shipmates while her captain was ashore. The two pirates, meeting in the Grand Caymans, joined forces, Low serving Lowther as a lieutenant. The association proved a trying one, due to Low's uncontrollable temper and his equally unpredictable conduct. Eventually Lowther decided it best they part company, but thinking it wise they remain friends, Lowther made Low a gift of the Rebecca, and bade him good luck. Low's cruise along the eastern seaboard proved a dismal failure until he ravaged the fishing fleet at Port Roseway.

Considered by many to be one of the most despicable pirates of all time, Low for reasons known only to himself treated Philip Ashton rather well. Usually he treated his captives harshly, subjecting them to various forms of torture, including unspeakable atrocities, before terminating their misery with a shot, death by drowning or at the end of a hangman's noose. Eventually the cruelties and inhuman practices he inflicted upon his victims (and recalcitrant members of his crew) brought about his own downfall and ended the short and notorious career of this savage buccaneer. Angered by his constant bullying and aroused by his senseless murder of a quartermaster, he was seized by his crew and cast adrift without food or water. Saved by a French warship, he was identified, tried and summarily hanged.

6. Like the majority of his fellow pirates, Low's crew was completely organized. Before each voyage it was their custom to prepare Articles covering the distribution of booty and establishing a code of conduct. Every member of the crew was required to affix his signature to the document or mark it with a cross. Presumably the Articles Ashton was asked to sign were similar to those published in the August 8, 1723 issue of the Boston News-Letter:

1. The Captain is to have two full Shares; the Master is to have one Share and one Half; the Doctor, Mate, Gunner and Boatswain, one Share and One Quarter.

2. He that shall be found guilty of taking up an Unlawfull Weapon on Board the Privateer or any other prize by us taken, so as to Strike or Abuse one another in any regard, shall suffer what Punishment the Captain and Majority of the Company shall see fit.

3. He that shall be found Guilty of Cowardice in the time of Engagements, shall suffer what Punishment the Captain and Majority of the Company shall think fit.

4. If any Gold, Jewels, Silver, &c. be found on Board of any Prize or Prizes to the value of a Piece of Eight, & the finder do not deliver it to the Quarter Master in the space of 24 hours he shall suffer what Punishment the Captain and Majority of the Company shall think fit.

5. He that is found Guilty of Gaming, or Defrauding one another to the Value of a Ryal of Plate, shall suffer what Punishment the Captain and Majority of the Company shall think fit.

6. He that shall have the Misfortune to loose a limb in time of Engagement, shall have the Sum of Six Hundred pieces of Eight, and shall remain aboard as long as he shall think fit.

7. Good Quarters to be given when Craved.

8. He that sees a Sail first, shall have the best Pistol or Small Arm aboard her.

 He that shall be guilty of Drunkenness in time of Engagement shall suffer what Punishment the Captain and Majority of the Company shall think fit.

10. No Snaping of Guns in the Hould.

- 7. Joseph Libbie [sometimes spelled Libbey, Libby, Lebby] and Lawrence Fabens [Fabins, Fabians] were held captives by the pirates for an undetermined period of time. From the first both served their captors unwillingly, but Libbie was eventually persuaded to join Low's crew. For reasons unknown he later switched loyalties and signed on with Charles Harris, another infamous freebooter, and served aboard his Ranger. Twelve months after he was seized by Low at Port Roseway he was caught and imprisoned when the Ranger fell to his Majesty's ship Greyhound. On Friday, July 19, 1723, Joseph Libbie, Harris and twenty-four other buccaneers were hanged at Newport, Rhode Island, for their crimes of piracy.
- 8. Joseph Dolliber, whose schooner was seized by Low and converted into a raider, was undoubtedly a descendant of the first settler to establish a home in Marblehead. According to tradition a fisherman bearing this name selected a site on a rocky headland in the area now known as Peach's Point and set up housekeeping in one of the Bay Colony's most unique dwellings:—a large hogshead, commonly used for shipping dried salt fish! For two years this capacious oversized barrel housed this intrepid pioneer whose name is sometimes spelled Dallaver, Dolever, Dollabar, Dolliver, Dollever, and Dolliber.
- 9. Carbonear: a fishing port on the Avalon Peninsula, on the west shore of Conception Bay, twenty-eight miles WNW of St. John's, Newfoundland.
- 10. St. Michaels: present-day São Miguel, largest of the Azores Islands, 900 miles west of Lisbon, Spain.
  - 11. Bonavista: Boa Vista, a fishing center in the Cape Verde Islands.
- 12. St. Nicholas: São Nicolau Island, one of the Cape Verde Islands in the Windward group.
- 13. Triangles: a reef formed by several islets in the Gulf of Mexico, off Dutch Guiana.

- 14. New Spain: an area encompassing Central America, Mexico, and the West Indies.
- 15. Francis Farrington Spriggs: fellow pirate friend and companion of Low and Lowther and like them he barbarously mistreated and abused all who fell into his hands. Spriggs' career was short; according to contemporary reports he was marooned by a crew sickened by his atrocities.
- 16. Roatan: the largest of a group of small islands in the Caribbean off the coast of Honduras, which together with Utila and Bonacca form the Bay Islands.
- 17. Ozenbrig: correctly spelled Onasburg, a coarse cotton cloth generally used for plantation suits, work shirts and rough wear.
- 18. Mammees Supporters: Memmea americana: [mammee-sapota, the marmalade tree] the Mammee Apple, a tropical fruit, 4-6 inches in diameter, with a russet-colored leathery skin. Its pulp is yellow, pleasing to taste and contains 1-4 large seeds, as noted by Ashton.
- 19. Mangeneil Apple: the poisonous fruit of the Manchineel tree (Hippomane Mancinella).
- 20. Barber's Pole: probably *Elaps Lemniscatus* (earlier *Micrurus Ruatanus*) a much-dreaded venomous snake marked with black rings on a white ground.
- 21. Firk their pork: presumably a colloquial term meaning to flense, flay or strip the hide from an animal's carcass.
- 22. Captain Dove: despite a thorough search the full name of this sea captain friend of Ashton remains a mystery. Contemporary English shipping records do however mention a William Dove, a sea captain and resident of Salem. They note too that in 1719 this Dove was master of the schooner Restoration and six years earlier master of the brigantine Success. One can only speculate why Philip Ashton who so carefully observed and so accurately described the flora and fauna of Roatan failed to make known the name of the sea captain who brought him back to his family and friends after years of solitude and suffering, and why, experienced mariner that he was, he never once named the brigantine on which he served as a paid hand!

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Number Ten





